

# AMERICA

A CATHOLIC REVIEW OF THE WEEK

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JULY 31, 1937

## WHO'S WHO

**AILEEN O'BRIEN** was born American. Almost all of her twenty-odd years have been spent South American and European. Her later education was in Fribourg, Switzerland. While there, attests Rev. F. N. Pitt, of Louisville, "practically single-handed she organized the Pro Deo Society to fight Russian Communism, a Society which spread over the country and received the approval of the Holy Father." From September, 1936, till March, 1937, she has been in Spain as representative of the Irish Christian Front. Her article is "on the old Spanish idea of the State, something which I have found most people ignore." Nicely, she informs us: "Your attitude on Spain from the very beginning has been of the soundest, and I may tell you that it has been fully appreciated in Spain." Miss O'Brien expects to lecture in the United States next autumn. . . . **FATHER FERGER**, in his covering letter foresees the end of the Civil War: "The patience of Franco and the realization that he will have to build cities if he destroys them, have kept him from completely annihilating the Loyalists during these weeks." . . . **ALFRED G. BRICKEL**, S.J., frequent contributor to periodicals, holds the chair of Professor of the History of Philosophy, St. Robert Bellarmine Seminary, West Baden, Indiana. . . . **DAN GILBERT** attended Oakdale (Calif.) High School, University of Nevada, University of Arizona. He drank in atheistic poison, objected to it, and says: "As a result, my college career ended disastrously." Off and on, he pursues newspaper work. Otherwise, he writes crusading books against subversive education.

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# COMMENT

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MUSIC pervading the air was Guglielmo Marconi's contribution to the age in place of a few musical compositions for the orchestra or an opera or two for the professional singer. His father wanted him to study music after the completion of his course at the University of Bologna. No doubt the finely-attuned spirit of the inventor of wireless would have produced compositions worthy of his exalted genius. But the young Marconi was interested in the electric waves only recently discovered by Heinrich Hertz. He had the patient, tireless soul of a scientific investigator rather than the soaring spirit of the musician. His life is a chronicle of the most startling scientific discoveries of our era. Wireless, the radio, television, the radio beam, even the transmission of power by means of the radio beam are some of the problems he attacked, and either perfected or in some measure opened up for future development. Undaunted by opposition and criticism he heroically faced obstacles and disappointments before which a less generous soul would have succumbed. His death is the world's loss. His scientific contributions merit for him a lasting place in the Hall of Fame.

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REPUBLICS are sometimes grateful. Last week in aged Negro who does not know how old he is, but who has worked in the Capitol for sixty-three years, was voted his salary for life and an assistant to do all his work! His name is Harry Parker, and for forty-six years he has been janitor of the House Ways and Means Committee. Of late, as Representative Warren, of North Carolina, explained, "his feet hurt him, and you have to come from the South to know what it means when an old colored man's feet hurt him." That began the composite panegyric of Harry. Chairman Doughton, of the Committee, also from North Carolina, said that Harry was "one of the most faithful and conscientious gentlemen it has ever been my privilege to meet." A Yankee gentleman, Representative Treadway, of Massachusetts, added that Harry was "a faithful friend—not servant—to every member of the House." Harry's cup of pleasure ran over when Representative Warren told him: "You can just hang around, and make this your home, for you are as much a part of this institution as any member here." After that the House stood and applauded for one minute. We hope that Harry, a model of fidelity to duty, will continue to enjoy his emoluments for many years.

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PALESTINE furnishes the political observer with a number one example of unruly chickens returning to disturb the parental roof. How many and how often British statesmen have lamented the

Balfour Declaration, its aftermath the Palestinian Mandate, and its consequent flock of troubles, we do not know. It has been hinted more than once on both sides that since Mussolini's incursion in Ethiopia that Palestine was being used to build up England's military position. If this be so, she is paying the price of ruffled tempers and broken friendships. Like the paper mapping of Central Europe and the Balkans that followed Versailles, the British intention may have been high-minded but very impractical. The "surgical operation" of the tripartite division recommended by the Palestine Royal Commission is admittedly an emergency procedure in a desperate case. It looks as if a military will have to be continually maintained as a police force. The Royal Commission's report has satisfied neither Jew nor Arab. It may not satisfy the League of Nations.

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APOSTOLIC nets spread through Alabama brought almost nine hundred Catholics back into the fold in a drive lasting through the entire Lenten and Paschal seasons. The parish priests aided by the Missionary Servants of the Most Blessed Trinity visited from house to house, validating marriages, arranging for Baptisms and winning men back to the Sacraments. Mobile's Bishop Toolen declared that the reclaiming of fallen-away Catholics was the most important parish activity in Alabama. To the north and east of the Bishop's State the thousand miles of Appalachian hills stretch away as a vast field for similar missionary endeavor, where forlorn Murphys and Kellys have all but forgotten they were once initiated in the Church founded on Peter.

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FOREIGN Secretary Anthony Eden in a speech to the House of Commons on the European and Far Eastern crisis referred, as he so often does, to the League of Nations. He was glad the British representative at the international trade union conference at Warsaw had refused to join an anti-Fascist league for peace. "It must constantly be made clear that there is room at Geneva for all countries, whatever their political complexion and whatever their system of Government, provided they desire to co-operate in the work of the maintenance of peace. It cannot be too strongly asserted that the League cannot as a whole be 'anti' anything except dissension or war, or 'pro' anything except conciliation and peace." If the League of Nations had convened with the presence of the only power and influence that could raise it to this impartiality, if it had not been bound up with the Versailles Treaty and if the recent platform of Mr. Eden had been assumed at its opening, a far different outcome could have resulted.



PEACE movements have had much to suffer from their enthusiastic but hare-brained advocates. While a good position of solid work is being quietly championed toward world amity, the blare of the militant crusader injects a sour note. Sailing for the International Women's Week at Budapest, Miss Kitty Cheatham, acknowledging herself a free lance among peace propagandists, took a fling at the martial national anthems that have enthused warriors and fortified patriots in the past. "Bombs bursting in air and the rockets' red glare" are no proper words for children. They recall, besides, uncomfortable realization that this country once fought our English cousins. No doubt, if we rewrite our histories, we should remake our anthems. Whatever one's opinion on this, it is hard to get into the mental frame of Kitty Cheatham regarding the benedictions of peace that would descend on this war-scared planet if all the nations of the world would stand up and sing "Hallelujah." We hope that she has wisely arranged her route through Europe to Budapest.

WHAT you are worth in terms of future life earnings is an interesting question that need no longer go a-begging for answer. Research workers after laborious study of occupational incomes for eight years can now predict the investment value of the doctor, lawyer or architect as he steps forward to receive his diploma. The calculation is made solely on the basis of income and expected working-life span. The object of the study conducted by Harold F. Clark of Teachers College, Columbia University, is to direct students into the more paying professions. In this survey the doctors lead with an average working span of forty-two years, giving an average lifetime earnings of \$108,000. A banker in return for all his future earnings would feel safe in giving that lump sum to the young practitioner and yet receive a tidy remuneration of four per cent compound interest on the transaction. The lawyers come next with \$105,000, while dentistry, engineering and architecture follow. The farmer and farm laborer bring up the rear of the sixteen occupations with \$12,000 and \$10,000 respectively but with the added inducement of nine years added to the working-life span. As might be expected our teachers lag at the end of the professions. We thought the professions were badly overcrowded yet this study makes for a different view. There are, however, more than dollars to be reckoned with in choosing a life job.

WEEK-END excursions to London or Paris will doubtless be the order of the day in the not-too-distant future, now that successful flights across the Atlantic are an accomplished fact. Again Pan American Airways has led the way in the work of bridging the continents. Successful experimentation in the Pacific area has resulted in regular scheduled trips between San Francisco, Hawaii, the Philippines and China. More recent pathfinding has shown the plausibility of regular flights to Aus-

tralia. The completed round trip from New York to Ireland presages the eventual scheduling of regular passenger and mail services to Great Britain and the Continent. True, one successful flight does not necessarily signify the immediate possibility of regular service. The strong easterly winds regularly encountered on the westward trip are still a problem for solution. As Captain Harold E. Gray wisely remarked on landing at Port Washington, L. I.: "One survey flight cannot be conclusive." But the one successful flight does argue the ultimate successful inauguration of regular transatlantic air transportation. Captain Gray's accomplishment marks a new milestone in the history of world aviation.

EPOCHS have their rise and fall, and that of the career woman would seem definitely on the wane. A check-up at an Eastern college revealed that eighty-five per cent of the lasses were bent on marriage as their career. Other straws in the current wind suggest that the ladies are beginning to lay more store by the hearth than by a few extra dollars in their reticules. Chaos in the kitchen led Judith Lambert to quit her job as she tells it in the *Forum*. The double pull of the home and the newspaper office led to split personality and nervous indigestion. The fifty-fifty compromise between family and work so confidently essayed by the matrons of the early '20s is now, she insists, gone the way of World Peace and the Versailles Treaty. She wonders how the glowingly advertised new woman of Russia finds time to darn her husband's socks—or tell him where they are.

A SCHOOL wherein pupils actually demand extra classes would seem to belong to the realm of fiction or Ripley. Yet that is what has happened in past sessions of the Summer School of Catholic Action conducted by Daniel A. Lord, S.J. and the staff of the *Queen's Work*. During the six seasons since 1931, 7,000 priests, Brothers, Sisters, seminarians, collegians, high-school students and lay people from every walk of life have attended, been thrilled and spiritually invigorated, and have then returned home to carry out into practical life what they had learned. The purpose of the school is to inspire Catholics of all ranks with a desire to work for Christ and His Church; to show them how it can be done intelligently and effectively through organization-work of all kinds. Some one has said that Father Lord and his staff in their continual journeys throughout the length and breadth of the land act as sponges absorbing ideas and schemes and plans from everywhere, and then squeeze out all these ideas, highly colored with their own dynamic personal views, at the S. S. C. A. Everywhere the response to these summer sessions has been the same; "Now I can go back and live my religion twenty-four hours a day." This year the sessions will be held successively at Loyola University, New Orleans, at Canisius College, Buffalo and at Providence High School, Chicago.

# GRANDEE AND PEASANT CATHOLIC AND ANARCHIST

An analysis of the social structure of Spain

AILEEN O'BRIEN

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ONE NIGHT we were sitting in the lobby of Salamanca's *Gran Hotel*. There were present members of General Franco's staff, one of his Ministers, some volunteers back from the Front who looked, with their long hair and beards, their tanned, lean faces, and their cloaks with a great scarlet cross on their breast, like characters out of the *Annals of the Cid*.

There was also an Englishman, who spoke halting Spanish.

Someone remarked: "There's a report that the Duchess of X has been shot in Madrid."

"How awful," murmured the Englishman, sympathetically.

One of the Spaniards looked at him and said: "If they hadn't shot her we should have done it. I'm glad, however, that the Reds took on the job."

"Why?" asked the amazed Englishman.

"She was a spy for the Reds long before the war, and continued after it was declared. Her usefulness, however, seems to have ended."

"Oh, I see. That was awful."

The Spaniard smiled, but there was a strained look about him.

"I should have shot her, not for being a spy, but for having danced a tango *solo* in a Madrid nightclub."

His face, ordinarily bland and good humored, had about it something of the expression of a particularly ruthless judge. There was a noise like a strangled gurgle from the Englishman and, being the only other foreigner present, I turned to him in order to explain; but after one look at his face I merely sighed, and said nothing. It was useless.

Scenes like that were enacted every day, and every day I felt that the task of explaining Spain to foreigners was an utterly hopeless one. Spain is something that no one, who has not been brought up among Spaniards, can ever fully understand. The words which had so shocked the Englishman were perfectly clear to me; moreover, I fully agreed with them. But then, I had been brought up under the Spanish system of education, and my earliest standards were Spanish standards, completely alien to those of any other country. I had lived in other countries for many years, and being American and Irish could appreciate the terrific gulf which separated Spain and the rest of the world's nations.

Spain has been cut off, always, from the rest of the world. To some this seems a disadvantage; but to those who really know Spain, her history and literature, her saints and her sinners, nothing the rest of the world has to offer could be worth a weakening of the virile, realistic "Spanishness" of the Peninsula. Spain asked nothing of other countries because she was completely self-sufficient. Economically she is one of the richest countries in Europe, though her riches have never been fully exploited. From the literary and artistic point of view, the very nature of Spain's greatness is the unadulterated "Spanishness" of her great artists. Socially, the outlook on life was thoroughly Catholic, thanks to those who had fought like tigers to preserve the spiritual integrity of the nation against any and all heresies whether they came from the outside, like Protestantism, or from the inside.

The Inquisition was essential not to the Spanish Church, but to the State. It was upheld by statesmen in the face of opposition from Churchmen, because the authority of the State was based on the Catholicism of the people who, being essentially realists, would bow down only before something eternal and real, as eternal as themselves and as real as the problems that faced them, something which their logical Latin minds would force them to accept as being definitely superior and stronger than their own proud individualism. Catholicism alone offered all this. Being infinitely wise, the Church used the Spaniard's virtues of realism and logic to combat his individualism which amounted to anarchism, his generosity to curb his cruelty, and this wholeheartedness to set a standard that Spanish pride would strive to reach or to surpass.

The saying that the Spaniard is either an Anarchist or a Monarchist is very true. And here I come to the words which so shocked the Englishman at Salamanca. Why should the Duchess be shot for dancing a tango *solo* in a Madrid nightclub? The night-clubs are full of girls dancing the tango, the jota, the sevillana. Why was it treason for the Duchess to do it?

It was treason because, like heresy, it undermined the Spanish State. The Spaniard is democratic in that a peasant, speaking to a marquis, may address him as "thou." His opinions and those of



the marquis are of equal value. He obeys the marquis, and above the marquis, the king, only because they have received their right to be obeyed from God. But, if he obeys the king, and is not free to do otherwise, neither is the king free not to command. The king must command, and the peasant must obey, because such is the will of God.

There is a Spanish saying which goes, more or less: "The grandee is solemn in his castle and I laugh in the tavern." Because God placed the grandee above the ordinary man, he has a higher standard up to which he must live. And the grandee did live up to it for centuries. He was austere, learned, pious, and did not, under any circumstances, take part in those spontaneous, boisterous and thoroughly delightful feasts of the proletariat. This rule of conduct was so strict that foreigners could not stand the life at the court of Madrid nor that of the grandee in his sombre castle perched on a mountain top or crouching on the vast, weatherbeaten plain. The advantage derived by the grandee was unwavering loyalty and obedience from the gay and happy lower classes.

As long as Spain remained isolated from the rest of Europe, the system worked, producing the Spain of the great days. But shortly after the French Revolution, and especially during the disastrous wars of Napoleon, foreign influence began to trickle through the Pyrenees and weaken the structure of Spanish society. The influence of countries, which to make men equal dress them all in blue serge suits, could not be resisted for long, without a strong, wise and just king who might alter the outer aspect of his house without imperiling the foundations. Only a renewal of a spiritual sort could have saved Spain, but together with new fashions in dress and behavior, Freemasonry crept in. The weakening influences attacked the aristocracy, and little by little the grandees left their castles and called at the tavern where at first they were received with astonishment, later with uneasiness, and later still, with disdain. If the grandee was no longer strong enough to lead a life too austere for the tavern-frequenter, why should the tavern-frequenter respect him? The king allowed his private life to invade public life; he amused himself, traveled, hobnobbed with everyone. He no longer acted with the dignity of a man appointed by God to rule the people.

Things went from bad to worse, until, after the elections of February, 1936, anarchy reigned in a mild form. It burst in all its fury when the war was declared. The anarchistic element in the Valencia Government and troops is hardly ever mentioned, and never discussed, outside Spain, and yet it is by far the strongest. This is accountable owing to the fact that few people in the world can bring themselves to believe that hundreds of thousands of men actually and seriously want to be Anarchists. In Spain, on the Nationalists' as well as on the Loyalists' side, it is taken for granted. Socialism and even Communism are foreign importations, alien to the Spanish character, but Anarchism is vitally Spanish and therefore thrives and grows stronger as the wavering Socialists and Communists fall out

amongst themselves and give in time and again to the ruthlessly realistic F. A. I. and C. N. T., the two strong, anarchistic organizations in Red Spain.

The present war has done a great deal to bridge over the gap that had formed and widened between the aristocracy and the people. The astounding percentage of young aristocrats who have fallen on the battlefield has disproven the contention of the people that they were good for nothing; while the instant uprising of thousands of peasants and workers, willing to defend their Faith and their Spain even after the grandees had let them down during so many years, was a lesson which the aristocracy will not forget. Both sides have confessed this to me. They have also told me that they are fighting, not for any political system, but for the preservation and the strengthening of the only foundation capable of supporting the structure of any Spanish State, namely Catholicism.

No matter what form of government emerges from Franco's victory, Spain shall once more call herself *España la Católica*. Already, above the din of battle, one can hear the quiet, authoritative tones of the Cardinal Archbishop of Toledo, censuring, praising, molding a nation rudely awakened from a stagnant sleep into vibrating, militant life. His task is one which no one, knowing the Spanish character, would envy, but a glorious task, nevertheless. The old structure of the Spanish State cannot return for many reasons, one of them being that the Spain of tomorrow will be composed to a great extent of those Communists, Socialists and, above all, Anarchists who were born of the weaknesses of the structure, and finally overthrew it. It is only by education that they will once again accept the religion which they destroyed as being a part of the old Spain they hated, the religion which, in the words of Pepe Diaz, General Secretary of the Communist Party, "... does not exist and will never exist again ... because the arms are in the hands of the right people."

The aspect of the Church which will predominate in Spain will be Social Justice, rather than Hierarchy. But, just as in order to destroy Spain, the Valencia leaders were obliged to destroy the Church, Franco's leaders have been obliged to reinstate the Church in order to reinstate Spain. This war was prophesied by Azaña himself when, as far back as 1931, he said: "Since the last century Catholicism has ceased to be the expression and guide of Spanish thought. . . . Today Spain has ceased to be Catholic." Those were the words which separated Spain into two radically opposed camps and banded together the men and women who knew that, if Azaña's words were true, Spain would suffer the only alternative: anarchy. She suffered it, and is emerging from a war to the death between those whose battle cries are: "Long live Christ the King! Long live Spain" and those whose cries are: "Death to Spain! Death to Christ! Long live Russia!" I have heard both in Spain, and to me they seem to be absolutely logical, the expression of Spanish thoroughness, that thoroughness which foreigners writing or speaking about Spain deny, because they cannot understand it.

# SCHOLASTICISM LEADS THE WAY TO SOCIAL JUSTICE

Dim cloisters and modern problems

ALFRED G. BRICKEL, S.J.

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SOME moderns think that the so-called "modern" philosophy from its founder, Descartes, to its finisher, Kant, is quite preeminently the philosophy of the market-place, of the big outdoor world where men are ruthless in thwarting those who keep them from the golden gains of commerce. Scholasticism, on the other hand, is the philosophy of the dim cloisters of the Middle Ages, a thing peacefully elaborated by pale students whose windows were barred on this work-a-day world. Such an idea has not even the doubtful merit, I think, of being a half-truth.

Modern philosophies, in fact, from that of the all-too-lucid Descartes to that of the darkly riddling Kant and mystic Hegel, have shunned the public discussion and loved the quiet incense-burning of the cliques that took over education after the Protestant Revolution. But medieval Scholasticism ever sought the arbitrament of public discussion, even though it called out the provost's guard in Paris or broke heads in Oxford and Bologna. In truth what happened to philosophy after the so-called Reformation was the same fate as had befallen religion.

Philosophy like religion, especially in the north of Europe, became a private thing, provincial, local, national, isolated from the common life and the corporate thought of the great Fathers and Doctors of Christendom. Social justice can find no prop in modern philosophy owing to the fact that modern philosophy grew up in isolation from the common man, uncriticized by the healthy discussion in scholastic philosophy, and nurtured within the social framework of a system which looked upon industrial capitalism as normal to man instead of a temporary interlude between distributism and communism.

Scholasticism, too, professes totality. It discourses of the problems of the market-place as well as of the home and the cloister, of Plato as well as Aristotle, of Maimonides the Jew as well as of Averroes the Arab, of justice as well as the just price, of peace as well as of war. Let us expand somewhat this thought of the totality of Scholasticism lest we be accounted a bit cavalier in dismissing the modern philosophers as isolated people, a very *gens lucifuga*.

Scholasticism, it is true, did not attain totality at a single bound. From Boethius in the sixth century to Saint Anselm in the eleventh Scholasticism busied itself with the problems of logic. The ferment of the twelfth century, in which modern historians recognize the real Renaissance, saw the emergence of metaphysics. The thirteenth century, now in possession of very accurate versions of the complete Aristotle, saw the full circle of philosophic totality rounded out. Ethics, politics, economics, each finds its place in the great series of *Summae* inaugurated by Alexander of Hales. Saint Antonio in the century before Luther and Calvin discusses all the questions which make up the discipline of social justice. And he but elicits into fuller development the ideas on usury, work, property, wages, money, the just price and kindred topics which are to be found, at least in germ, in the works of the great masters of medieval thought, in Saint Thomas, and in Saint Bonaventure and Duns Scotus.

Now when we contrast this philosophy of totality, this *philosophia perennis*, as Leibnitz liked to call it, with modern philosophy, what do we find? We find that the moderns are narrow, that they have lost the feeling for totality. First of all they restrict their field of vision to one small corner of what the medievals called philosophy. The moderns cultivate by preference that little angle of the philosophic garden where the pungent herbs of criticism grow. In place of a total philosophy the moderns offer us something of the theory of knowledge, a sub-section of logic. They almost suppress ethics, though Spinoza does write an ethics *more geometrico*. That is he treats ethics as mathematics, the folly of which procedure Aristotle had warned us against some two thousand years before. Descartes wished to know if we can know anything and he comes to the conclusion that he does not know. Locke, too, wished to know if we can know and ends in a deeper scepticism than that of Descartes. Berkeley thinks this most gross and solid world of matter which surrounds us is no matter. He is a modern Plotinus. These things he publishes in Ireland where hard logic ruled the rest of the populace. The other moderns vary the same theme endlessly. They forever burrow into the question,



What can I know? They become humble in a perverted way. For God never wanted us to doubt about our power to come by truth, though we may well be diffident about whether we have the will to live by truth. Humility got misplaced in the scheme of things fostered by the modern philosopher and lodged itself in the intellect instead of the will. From this grievous misplacement arose many judgments far removed from true humility, and further removed from truth.

By Kant's time there was much confusion, thanks to the eighteenth-century atheists, deists, sentimentalists and such plain hard-cash men as Franklin, who found no difficulty in being at the same time Quaker, Mason, Presbyterian, Freethinker and Sage. Kant put the whole mess into a witches' caldron and stirred the contents vigorously for forty years. His results did not fit into a philosophy that might advance social justice. By that time indeed capitalism, at least in England, had apotheosized itself and judged the progress of others by their ability to suffer the emotions and be proud of the results of industrial capitalism. By the mid-nineteenth century Ireland and Poland were considered negligible because their skies were still untainted by the miasmas of the smoking factories, their rivers still clear of the poisons and dyes of industrialism. It was a sorry standard we set up, when we began to rate social progress by the extent to which a *laissez-faire* capitalism had succeeded in reducing a considerable part of the people to a condition differing little from slavery.

The Irish were dubious about the hogs' broth served up by England as "civilization" and the Poles doubted the efficacy of the eyewash proffered by the Prussians. For the Faith held tenaciously made the Irish and the Poles keener in mind than the English and the Prussians. Then, too, at least some Irishmen and some Poles got a glimpse of wider horizons from the reading of the half-mythical, almost entirely forgotten masters of the medieval schools who had said such obviously insane things as "taking money for the mere use of money is wrong." In the days of the Reformation scholastic philosophy, in the person of Saint Peter Canisius, could still be heard denouncing usury, but in the days of what the subsidized universities called "sweetness and light" such denouncing seemed insane.

Sadly enough Scholasticism had swiftly declined, its teachings on social justice were soon smothered and rich Catholics became, so far as social justice is concerned, much like rich Jews, rich Protestants and rich atheists. The West by the year 1900 with the exception of small patches in Ireland, Italy, Poland and Spain was busily engaged in worshipping the golden calf, in mouthing praises of that hypertrophy of the acquisitive sense in men that we call capitalism.

Even today after half a century of the scholastic revival we find Catholics in high places who complain about the Pope of Rome in economics as something incongruous, not dreaming that they are singing the old English Protestant ditty that "the Pope of Rome hath no jurisdiction in this

realm." So feebly have the economic doctrines of Scholasticism voiced by Leo and Pius been publicized that elemental ideas on social justice seem quite radical to those Catholics who send their sons to Yale and Harvard and Princeton to imbibe capitalist economics with its ideas stemming ultimately from John Calvin.

Scholasticism, in short, is the friend of social justice owing to its totality, its recognition of the fact that economics and politics are not substantive sciences but departments of ethics, owing too to the fact that it was born in an air of public and social discussion. Capitalism does not want public discussion especially if the discussion turns on international bankers, usury or monetary questions. In this capitalism is like modern philosophy. For so long a time it has barred from its kept press discussions of social justice, usury, the just price, collective bargaining, the wage contract, that last year Father Coughlin's magazine *Social Justice* went into a half million circulation overnight. It fills a need. It finds a public hungry for the data that the metropolitan papers keep out of their pages. It builds on the time-honored priestly philosophy, the ancient but not antiquated scholastic philosophy that resounded in better days from Bologna and Salamanca to Paris and Heidelberg and Oxford. It is scholastic in its desire to discuss social and economic questions rather than to suppress them.

Scholasticism in its totality, its quest for a world view is a foe of that specialization which is a twin of modern philosophy and a glory and a curse of the modern scene. In a sense specialization is a glory of the moderns for it pushes back the boundaries of the unknown. But it is a curse too, since it nourishes the vanity of the man who thinks that because he knows more about the fruit fly than any living man, he is competent to discuss with equal authority the Greek of Saint Paul, the immortality of the soul, or Saint Thomas' ideas on usury. Scholasticism insists on the full scope of philosophy from logic and epistemology to ethics and theodicy. It insists on social ethics as well as statistics and reads lessons to the proletariat as well as to the capitalist. It will read Adam Smith or Karl Marx, but will not be tempted to scamp the reading of Aristotle or Plato or Saint Thomas or Suarez or Bellarmine. Besides it will not only read but it will discuss as well.

Scholasticism, then, and not any modern philosophy should be the basis of our attempts at social reform. It has the historical prescriptive right. The modern philosophies were born in a world that considered capitalism as an advance. Scholasticism alone is the eternal philosophy, total, supra-national, not the work of any one philosopher or little club of philosophers but the voice of man as man. It transcends man economic, man politic, man national, and seeks to place man, whether under capitalism or guild-socialism or distributism or totalitarianism, in his proper relation to God, to man, to machinery, to land, to stocks, bonds and money. It must prevail or social reform is doomed. We shall not rise but fall into yet lower cycles of despair.

Our correspondent in Spain

# MOORS AND CLERGY LOYAL TO NATIONALISTS

EDWARD J. FERGER

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PROPAGANDA spread by Communists and radicals throughout the United States and Europe has beclouded the real issues in the Spanish Civil War. I shall take two instances of the type of misinformation sent out by them: one is the case of the alleged division among the priests of Spain; the other is the supposed outrages reported to have been committed by the Moors.

Unfortunately, there have been a number of the Basque priests favoring the Loyalist cause. It is due, unquestionably, to the strong nationalism among these Basques. But I have talked to many of those priests who are Basques and who have remained loyal to the Nationalist cause. One thing is certain. With the exception of the few Basque priests who have put nationalism above the cause of religion and who have blinded themselves to the wholesale murder of Religious in the last year, the priesthood of Spain is solidly back of Franco. That statement can be made definitely and with finality. And I am convinced, after visiting the Basque country as far west as the trenches on the Santander front, that the priests favoring or lending support to the Loyalists for the sake of a strong and unbending nationalism, are now thoroughly disillusioned. They are conscious of the great error that was committed by aligning themselves with the Leftist forces.

One has only to visit Cardinal Gomá, Primate of Spain, to understand the solidarity that exists among the priests of the country. I spent two hours with this distinguished prelate on July 5, and in every word from his saintly lips there was evidenced the spirit of the priests of Spain. His interest in the attitude of the United States toward the Nationalist cause was another matter that he clearly emphasized. He wanted to know what the American Catholic thought of the terrible war, and whether the American Catholic was prepared to make a sacrifice for the Church in Spain that had so horribly suffered under the so-called Republic. I explained to him that the feeling of the American Catholic was indeed crystalized and that the charity of the American Catholic would manifest itself in his generous contributions through the agency of the America Spanish Relief Fund.

Upon making that statement, he instantly left

his chair and went to his typewriter and typed the following message:

To the Catholics of the United States:

Through the good offices of the Rev. Edward Ferger we have learned of the spirit of charity that actuates the Catholics of your great country. So grateful an assurance has moved us profoundly, demonstrating the spirit of Christian concord that unites us all together. It is a cause of gratification for Spain to have at her side the Catholics of your great country in these dire moments. In no other way would it be possible for us to repay your wish to help us in our great actual need than to ask Our Lord, the Giver of all good gifts, to shower His abundant graces on all Catholics and institutions that foster this Christian spirit in the United States. To all, in the name of the Spanish episcopate, we impart our most affectionate blessing.

I. Card. Gomá  
Archbishop of Toledo

That message expresses, I believe, the keen interest of Cardinal Gomá in the America Spanish Relief Fund. And I may say that upon the generosity of the American Catholic as well as the American non-Catholic hinges the future of religion in a country where more than fourteen thousand of her priests have been shot. Hundreds of churches will have to be rebuilt. Schools, orphanages and asylums will have to be erected. New seminaries will have to be maintained to educate young men to replace the priests so cruelly murdered. It will require a large sum of money to accomplish all that must be done, not to restore the Faith of the Spaniard, for such Faith never dies, but to restore the Church physically that she may administer to the spiritual needs of the Spanish people.

The second instance of Red propaganda that seemed plausible to the outside world is the case of the Moors. I have read in the United States and also in Europe of the terrible outrages committed by these Moors. There is not a single iota of truth in these charges. Instead of being a brute ready to kill and to assault innocent women and children, I have found this Moor to be very much of a gentleman. I could not find one instance where a Moor has outraged the principles of the commonest decency. In fact, I saw them everywhere, in the streets and cafes mixing with the people. I saw them from San Sebastian to Malaga. I lived in the same monastery with them in Salamanca for two



days. I saw them playing with the children on the streets; for the Moor has a great love of children, and I was told that he has a great respect for womanhood.

Is it possible that the Nationalists would permit the Moor to mix with their civilians if the Moor was the character painted by the Loyalists? Seventy-two of them are Franco's private bodyguard. And their love and devotion to Francisco Franco are the noblest evidence of affection with which I have ever come in contact.

The plain truth is that I have infinitely more confidence in the integrity of this Moor than I have in the Communists. At least, I found him to be a gen-

tleman, which is more than I can say of those who shot priests by the wholesale and committed unspeakable outrages upon innocent women dressed in the habit of religion.

I asked one of the officers of the Moors who is a first lieutenant, why his soldiers were fighting for the Nationalist cause. His answer contains a logic which is indisputable. He said: "Franco has religion; the Moor has religion; the Red has no religion. Franco is a good man; the Moor is a good man; the Red is not a good man." For simple candor and truthfulness, that statement embodies the attitude of this soldier from the north of Africa, whom the American press has vilified.

# STATE EDUCATION CURTAILS RELIGIOUS RIGHTS

## Protestant, Jewish parents should be alarmed

DAN W. GILBERT



NOBODY seems to be aware of it, but religious liberty is seriously abridged in America today. We are not threatened with loss of religious freedom; we are now suffering from a substantial loss of it. This may seem to be a rash statement, yet it is a conclusion logically drawn from inescapable facts.

What do we mean by religious liberty, anyway? We mean, not merely the right to hold religious belief, but the right to propagate it. The narrowest conceivable concept of religious freedom includes, as an irreducible minimum, the right of parents to bring up their children in the religious faith of their choice. And it is this innermost vital element of religious liberty which is being ruthlessly infringed in America today.

It is true that the right of parents to impart religious instruction to their offspring is not directly denied. But it is insidiously negated, in many parts of the nation, by the prevailing system of State-supported public education. It is a notorious fact that large elements of our public-school system are controlled and directed by theories and theorists of anti-religion. In those sections where public education is deliberately designed to be anti-religious, this is the situation: parents are, of course, "free" to teach Christianity to their children. But, in the name of "academic freedom," atheist educators are equally "free" to teach anti-Christianity to children,

going to tax-supported schools from Christian homes. Obviously, the "freedom" exercised by the godless educators neutralizes and negates the freedom rightly claimed by Christian parents. Impartial surveys show that State-supported high schools destroy the religious faith of from fifteen per cent to thirty per cent of the pupils enrolled therein. State universities wreck the faith of from fifteen per cent to thirty per cent of the students who escaped faith-destruction in secondary school.

The most authentic survey of the manner in which State-supported high schools and colleges are destroying religious faith is that made by Dr. James H. Leuba, of Bryn Mawr College. In 1914, Dr. Leuba made a detailed investigation which revealed that, of the students entering college as believers, scarcely half of them were still believers at the time of graduation. In 1933, Dr. Leuba made another investigation which reveals a still more alarming condition. The results of his survey were published in *Harpers Magazine*, August, 1934. According to Dr. Leuba's findings, in a typical "large and progressive" university only twenty per cent of the seniors, in 1933, were believers. In another college, which he calls College B, only five per cent of the seniors believed in immortality. Here we find almost a complete negation of the religious liberty of parents. It may well be assumed that the parents of at least

seventy-five per cent of these students taught them the existence of God and of immortality. Yet, godless professors at this college have, in fourteen out of fifteen cases, effected a complete denial of the right of parents to rear their children in religious belief.

It is doubtful if the Soviet system, under which parents are imprisoned for impressing religious "propaganda" upon their children, is more effective in accomplishing the atheizing of youth. Certainly, our system is more subtle and insidious. Parents are "free" to impress religious ideas upon their children. But, godless educators follow after them, undoing their work and, in effect, denying their "freedom" to accomplish this essential task in the proper rearing of children.

Dr. Leuba's survey shows that anti-religious education is coming, more and more, to prevail in high schools as well as colleges. For instance, in 1914, he found, in College A, that eighty per cent of the new students enrolling as freshmen were believers. But in 1933, only forty-two per cent were believers. This would strongly tend to indicate that, during the past two decades, anti-religious instruction has been seeping down into the secondary schools from the colleges. Any impartial survey of the type of instruction being widely infiltrated into State-supported high schools will confirm this conclusion.

Of course, it may be said that Christian parents are secure in their Constitutional right to send their children to private "pro-religious" rather than public "anti-religious" schools. But this "right" is more theoretical than real.

The bald fact is that, at the present time, it is impossible for all Christian parents to exercise their right to isolate their children from anti-religious educational influences. Our compulsory school attendance laws being what they are, millions of Christian parents are obliged either to send their children to State-supported schools or go to jail. In many communities, the lack or inadequacy of private schools makes attendance of public schools, in effect, mandatory.

But aside from this consideration, it must be recognized that, in the very act of maintaining anti-religious public schools, the State is abridging the religious liberty of parents. The State professes to "guarantee" to parents the right to rear their offspring in religious faith. Plainly, it impairs this guarantee when it maintains tax-supported schools which operate to destroy the religious faith of children. In effect, when the State maintains a school system which functions as a faith-destroying agency, it vitiates its own "guarantee" of freedom of faith-propagation.

In addition, it rears an almost insuperable barrier to the exercise of the parental right to send offspring to private schools. It blocks the expression of this right when it requires that parents who pay to send their children to private schools must also pay to support public schools which they do not use and from which they derive no benefit. This system exactly doubles the cost of education to the parent who exercises his right to patronize private schools. In other words, the parent who wishes that his child

be not subjected to atheistic educational influences is penalized for availing himself of this Constitutional prerogative. The State makes it profitable, financially, to the citizen to refrain from rearing and educating his child in the Christian faith.

It is a sound axiom that "the power to tax is the power to destroy." Religious freedom—the right of parents to bring their children up in the Christian faith—is substantially destroyed by the prevailing State policy with respect to education. The citizen is highly taxed to support the public school system. In many situations, he is so heavily taxed as to make impossible his meeting the cost of sending his children to the private school of his choice. Moreover, the burden of taxation is so great that large bodies of Christian people are stripped of sufficient resources to provide the religious educational facilities necessary to the Christian education of their children. Large church groups, as well as individual Christians, are estopped from exercising fully their Constitutional right to foster religious education. The State, in effect, uses the power of taxation to destroy the right of religious freedom and religious propagation of its citizens.

Obviously, the only way to restore religious liberty to Christian parents is to apportion a fair share of school taxes collected from them to accredited religious schools which they may select for attendance by their children. The Supreme Court has affirmed the Constitutional right of parents to "direct the education of (their) children by selecting reputable teachers and places." This "right" clearly becomes non-existent if the States seize the share of the parent's income sequestered for educational purposes and requires that it be used to support educational institutions which the parent not only does not "select," but strongly desires to shun. If eighty per cent of the parents of a State "select" public schools for their children, and twenty per cent select parish schools, the only effective way to enforce the parental right of "selection" is to divide school tax-funds, on an eighty to twenty basis, among the educational systems respectively selected by parents. It makes a mockery of the Constitutional right of parents if, after they have made their choice, the State bleeds them white to support the schools which they did not choose.

Christian parents have the shadow, but not the substance, of religious freedom, of the right to direct their children's education, under the prevailing system. The bill proposed, in the Ohio and other State legislatures, to allocate from State school tax-funds a reasonable sum to parochial schools chosen by tax-paying parents for the education of their children—this measure, in one form or another, is absolutely essential to the re-establishment of the *reality* of religious liberty in our land.

In view of this simple truth, it is simply ridiculous for demagogues to shout that this meager measure of common justice and fairness to Christian parents is, in any way, an attempt to effect a union of Church and State. The fact is that its principal effect would be to break up the union of State and anti-Christianity as embodied in a godless educational system which now prevails.



# WITH SCRIP AND STAFF

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## PLEA FOR CONSERVATIVES

THE *English Review* has been combined with its great conservative contemporary the *National Review*. In the final number Mr. Derek Walker-Smith sketches in broad outline a program for England which, despite certain features to which one might take exception, is representative of all that is best and essential in conservative thought. He demands an efficient conduct of industry in which *all* will have a high standard of living, and where there will be a sense of corporate striving for the common welfare. He rejects planned economy after the modern manner, emanating from the dead hand of Whitehall, and insists upon "self-government deriving initiative and organization from informed sources within the industry." All involved should have the feeling that they belong to it.

Conservative thought in America outside of the Catholic Church is practically restricted to the classical faculties of our universities and to the able and articulate *American Review* group. As a consequence, conservatism has become a damning label for the radical extremist to plaster his opponent with, or a limp banner behind which cowards hide their inertia and poverty of thought.

True conservatism is a sterner metal. Paul Elmer More, himself a great conservative, observed in his essay on Disraeli that to be a good conservative requires imagination. The conservative is marked by a feeling for the organic character of society. He is aware of the varied and mutually enriching diversity that exists among the components of a nation, and insists that it is only by the vital play and harmonious action of the parts that the welfare of the body politic can be secured. His mind is structural and architectonic, and runs on hierarchy, on order, on social forms and institutions. He has read history and is steeped in the collective experience of the race.

G. K. Chesterton once cautioned reformers before they tore down a fence, to find out why other men had put it there. The conservative has found out; and he lets many of the fences remain.

Despite the popular clichés to the contrary, there is no impassable gulf between the true conservative and the true liberal (I mean the liberal and not the Liberal who bitterly and perversely tries to stretch all reality on the rack of his own half-truths). The difference may be spanned within the limits of the same personality as in Augustine of Hippo. The liberal becomes a conservative when he is faced by the radical extremist who seeks the unintelligent and brutal overthrow of the existing order. The conservative becomes a liberal when pitted against the reactionary who is an unimaginative and brutal defender of the things that are.

If I were asked to point the difference between

the true conservative and the true liberal, I should say that it is one of temperament and emphasis. The conservative lays more stress upon institutions, the liberal upon ideas. The conservative is attached to the principle of hierarchy; the liberal to that of essential equality. For the liberal everything begins and ends with the individual, the conservative looks more to society, though in the really great conservatives respect for society coexists with a passionate love of individual rights. The danger that lies in wait for the liberal is that he will become intoxicated by theory and pursue a mirage detached from reality; for the conservative that he will intrench himself behind some out-worn institution which history has long since jettisoned on its course; like the old monarchist defenders of the *ancien régime*. The seceding Basques were too conservative for the Catholic Church and so strayed from the way of truth and sanity. Emmanuel Mounier and his followers on *Esprit* were too liberal for the Catholic Church, and allowed themselves to be trapped into a tactical alliance with Marxism.

The Catholic Church is neither liberal nor conservative; Catholics may be either liberal or conservative according to personal temperament and historical accidents. The great liberal Pope, Leo XIII, was succeeded by the great conservative Pope, Pius X. The great conservative Cardinal Manning was followed by the great liberal Cardinal Newman. Catholics in France and in Spain are on the conservative side in politics; yet among the greatest liberal political thinkers of the age are the expatriate Sturzo of Italy and the exiled Bruening of Germany and the martyred Dollfuss of Austria.

In recent years liberals outside the Church have rolled pell-mell and in undignified postures in a Leftward direction as though a floor had been tilted beneath their feet with catastrophic suddenness. The sound of firing squads beyond the Vistula has brought them up short for the moment, and they must soon make up their minds whether they will desert the tried liberal ideals of freedom and unfettered personality for the magic pipes that blow from Moscow.

Liberal movements in France and other countries have been so captured by the Marxists, that it is impossible to cast a vote for decent wages without strengthening the hand of atheistic communism. If the American Catholic liberal, and his name is legion at least among the young, should ever be placed in that cruel and unnatural dilemma where he must choose between man's right to seek God and man's right to decent work, he will and he must know how to choose the primary freedom in place of any proximate or ancillary freedom, no matter how sweet or how ardently cherished.

GERARD J. MURPHY

## PRUSSIA REPEATS

NEARLY a century ago (May 16, 1840) twelve of the fifteen Bishops then constituting the Hierarchy in the United States met to open the Fourth Provincial Council of Baltimore. Among them were Eccleston, of Baltimore, our only Archbishop, the venerable Fenwick, of Bardstown, the great England, of Charleston, and the learned Kenrick, then Coadjutor of Philadelphia. Many were the problems which the prelates discussed; among them, the safeguarding of children in the public schools, mixed marriages, and the honest and fearless use of the ballot. But the Bishops also turned their eyes to Europe, and an eloquent passage in their Pastoral Letter expresses their sympathy with Catholics, "those glorious confessors of the Faith," then undergoing cruel persecution in Prussia.

As we read the passage, we are reminded of the disclosures recently made by Rosenberg, the official propagandist of Nazi paganism. According to this man, the Nazi Government has destroyed the Catholic press in Germany, has made it all but impossible for the Bishops to communicate with their flocks, and has begun a series of measures which will soon close all Catholic schools and bring the children in them under pagan and immoral influences. The significance of Rosenberg's statement is that it is more than an open confession that the Nazi Government has shamelessly broken its agreements with the Holy See. That the agreements have been brazenly set aside by the Hitler regime is no news to the world. The novelty lies in the boast made by an acknowledged spokesman for Hitler that, to the Nazi, solemn compacts are mere scraps of paper.

Yet, as we study the action of the American Bishops in 1840, and compare conditions as they exist in Germany today, the persecution of a century ago seems mild. It is true that the King of Prussia was closing Catholic schools, and casting into prison priests and Bishops who refused to bow to his will; and that in doing this, he was violating a sworn compact. But we do not read that he planned a campaign of calumny against all who fought for Christ, or that he erected schools in which the Christian principles of Faith and code of morality were to be replaced by the teaching of paganism. That has been left for Hitler and his Nazi hordes.

The genius of government, as it infests Prussia and emanates from Berlin, seems never to change. We are reminded of Wilson's distinction between a people and their government, and we fully accept it. But it remains true that Prussianism in government wherever we meet it remains always unaltered. It is a government of narrow bigotry, a government by brute force, a government indifferent to its most solemn obligations, an unbaptized government that has no place in a Christian civilization.

Meanwhile, it remains for us, whom God has spared these horrors, to pray for the afflicted peoples of Germany. May the Ruler of nations soon put their persecutors to flight.

## EDITOR

### BAD ADVISERS

SOME high officials have bad advisers. One is the individual who has announced, not indeed directly but by implication, that upon the President falls the duty of recommending legislative objectives, after which Congress is morally obliged to enact what the President desires. To support this novel view of the relations between the legislative and executive functions of the Federal Government, a vague reference to the Constitution is offered. Before we turn to the Constitution, we can see that under this theory Congress is not an independent body. It is a group of puppets.

### RESPONSIBILITY AND

AMERICANS are inclined to look upon the Committee for Industrial Organization with an indulgent eye. That will certainly be their attitude if they know anything about the steel and automobile industries, rich and powerful corporations that have troubled themselves little about social justice, their one purpose being profit on their investment. Probably they never heard the simple truth that the first charge on all returns is not profit for the investor, but a living wage for the workers. If they had, they would have laughed the statement to scorn, and probably would have dubbed it a message from Moscow. In that they would have displayed their usual ignorance, for the only wages in Russia are the wages customary in Sing Sing, Joliet, Alcatraz and our American prisons in general.

The C. I. O. has jolted the corporations. Of that, there can be no doubt. Hitherto, the managers of the steel and automobile industries have been interested in organization only to the extent that organization made the workers better instruments of production. With the human elements, vital not only to the workers but to their own prosperity, they have never seriously concerned themselves. It is perfectly clear that the conditions which the C. I. O. set itself to correct, or to destroy, were a menace to the whole country. Hence the country was disposed to look upon the Committee's first rude efforts with an indulgent, if not with an approving, eye. The work was so necessary that we could excuse imperfection in the attempts to do it.



## "OBJECTIVES"

THERE is not a word in the Constitution which provides that "on the President falls the responsibility of recommending objectives" to Congress. Under the Constitution the President is obliged "from time to time" to recommend to Congress "such measures as he shall judge necessary and expedient." But what the President is obliged to do, any citizen, even the humblest, may do, and Congress is obliged to listen to neither. On Congress itself falls the sole responsibility of choosing, under the Constitution, its objectives, and in this they are responsible only to the people.

## LITY AND THE C.I.O.

But as these first scattered forces were welded into unity and began to operate more vigorously, we saw reason for apprehension. Violence marked the progress of the C. I. O., along with a disposition to disregard signed contracts. At that point public sympathy began to fall away from the C. I. O. We need not consult the formal statements of the last four Popes, all deeply interested in the welfare of the wage-earner, all ardent champions of labor's right to organize freely and to bargain collectively, to understand the folly of that procedure. We need only consult our common sense.

Violence and the habit of breaking contracts may win certain immediate advantages, but in the long run they will ruin any union. For nearly thirty years this Review has championed the cause of labor, and precisely for that reason it has never countenanced violence and bad faith. We should have been poor friends to labor had we failed to warn the C. I. O. that it was beginning a course which would set organized labor back half a century.

In his letter of July 20, the president of the General Motors Corporation warns the C. I. O. that its contracts will not be renewed unless the Committee can give pledges for its future conduct. With the principle thus stated, we fully agree. If the Committee cannot or will not bind its members to responsibility, it cannot champion with any hope of success the cause of organized labor. Rights must be religiously respected wherever they are found.

## NO COMPROMISE!

LATE in the afternoon of July 22, Senator Walsh, of Massachusetts, issued a statement to the press. "This is a victory for the people," said the Senator. "In overwhelming numbers they have manifested profound respect for and faith in the Constitution of the United States, and a determination to fight for the protection of their inalienable rights under an independent judiciary." The Senator's words were a comment on the defeat of the President's Supreme Court bill by a vote of seventy Senators to twenty.

But in this moment of political confusion, the air is full of rumors about "reprisals" and "Presidential strategy." Whether these rumors refer to the President's original plan, or to the defeated Hatch-Logan amendment, is not yet clear. But for our guidance, it should be noted that not one of the "compromises" attributed to Administration supporters in the late battle was a compromise, for all embodied the principle of the original plan. That principle, as we understand it, would empower the President to exercise a control over the Supreme Court sufficient to insure approval of whatever legislation he might deem necessary.

The first compromise noted by the press came, it was said, from the brain of a genius who accompanied the body of the late Senator Robinson to its resting place in Arkansas. His compromise permitted the President to appoint six more members to the Supreme Court, provided the President was not Mr. Roosevelt.

This proposal showed no knowledge of the reasons which moved the Senate Committee on the Judiciary, and sundry Democratic members of the Senate, to reject the President's plan. They declined to give this power to Mr. Roosevelt, not primarily because they deem him a man of sinister aims, but because they are convinced that, as long as the Constitution lasts, they can give it to no man. Such power in the hands of any Executive would destroy the constitutional independence of the Supreme Court. They were fighting, not Mr. Roosevelt, but the destruction of constitutional government. To put the case in other words, Mr. Roosevelt was merely an incident in a battle fought to preserve the Constitution.

The other alleged "compromises" have been made fairly familiar to the country by the press. Under the most widely discussed of these proposals, the Executive would be empowered to pack the Court, but at the rate of only one extra Justice annually. Obviously, the principle of control of the judiciary by the executive department is as clearly contained in this compromise as in the original bill. The President is allowed to pack the Court, but forbidden to pack it swiftly. As for the other factitious compromises, all turn on the assumed fact that any man who has reached his seventy-fifth year is unfit to sit as a Justice of the Supreme Court, or on some other assumption equally unfounded.

In our opinion, President Roosevelt has by no

means abandoned his original plan. Tears over the sad fate his bill has met in the Senate are premature. For the present, he will probably hold his peace. Congress will adjourn within the next few weeks, and victors and vanquished will enjoy a breathing space. Party rifts can be repaired, and when Congress meets again, we shall have another "compromise."

In face of past "compromises," it is important to observe the President's attitude as recorded by his undoubted statements. Like Talleyrand, Mr. Roosevelt is a master of the art of using words to conceal thought, but in his letter to Senator Barkley he made it fairly plain that where a principle is at stake, he will brook no thought of compromise.

We heartily congratulate the President.

If he believes that the welfare of the country depends upon the enactment by Congress of his original plan, he can take no other stand. But we sincerely trust that the President's opponents will adhere to the same policy of no compromise, now or in October. Believing, as they do that the President's plan will not work for the country's welfare but for its ruin, they too, as honest and patriotic men, must hold out unterrified and unbroken to the end. By threats of "reprisals," they have been made to realize that their political fortunes hang in the balance. It would have been easy to follow the President, but they loved their country too well to barter its interests for political favor. That they at once took up the gage of battle, and fought without fear of reprisals, makes us hope that they, no less than Mr. Roosevelt, will brook no compromise.

Again we congratulate the President. Let his cry be ours. "No compromise!"

## TEACHERS AND PARENTS

THERE is a story in the *Saturday Evening Post* for July 24 by J. P. Marquand which we commend to teachers and parents and headmasters. We would commend it to schoolboys too, but probably they would not understand. We are not sure that teachers and parents and headmasters will understand it either. Even experts disagree after reading articles on secondary education for boys.

Somehow we cannot share Mr. Marquand's pessimism. More correctly, we can share it, but he offers us too much. Do headmasters and teachers and fathers always misunderstand their boys? Do boys always regard fathers and teachers and headmasters as bores to be borne with, as tyrants to be endured, but never as mentors to be consulted, or good men to be revered?

Certainly, we can see little good in the attempt to fit our boys to an Eton model. The experiment usually gives us an outward seeming and leaves out the soul. Besides, there are no county families here. We have, however, our full supply of snobs. It would be well not to add to them.

We venture to think that many of the difficulties pointed by Mr. Marquand will not be found in a Catholic school. For in them is found a philoso-

phy that can train and give a stamp. But we can learn to apply it more effectively.

## DEAF TO CHRIST

GREAT progress has been made in recent years in alleviating the sad lot of deaf-mutes. Even when the child is born without the organs of speech and hearing, much can be done by careful training to fit him for a useful place in life. In many American cities, Catholic schools are conducted for these afflicted children. They should be liberally supported, since, unfortunately, in many of the State and private institutions these poor little lambs are alienated from the one true fold.

In the Gospel appointed for tomorrow (Saint Mark, vii, 31-37) we read that Our Lord met one of these afflicted persons, as He passed by Sidon on His way to the Sea of Galilee. From the fact that Jesus at once "took him from the multitude apart," we may infer that his friends brought him before Our Lord at the conclusion of a discourse to the people. Sometimes Our Lord would work a miracle by a simple phrase expressing His will, but here He was pleased to use a ceremony which, strange as it may appear to us, was familiar to the Jews. Jesus first put His fingers in the ears of the deaf man, "and spitting, he touched his tongue: and looking up to heaven he groaned, and said to him: Ephpheta, which is: be thou opened: and immediately his ears were opened, and the string of his tongue was loosed, and he spoke right."

Among the Orientals of that time, saliva was commonly reputed to have medicinal qualities. Our Lord used it possibly as a way of signifying to the afflicted man that healing was at hand. Fervent prayer is sometimes described in Holy Scripture as "groaning," and that may be the significance here, although the word may merely indicate Our Lord's sympathy with the man. It is interesting to note that in the rite of Baptism, the Sacrament in which we are born to a new life, we find the use of saliva and the touching of the ears.

There is a parallel to deaf-mutism in the spiritual order. But here only the Divine Physician can cure, just as He alone can miraculously restore or give speech and hearing. The cure related by Saint Mark can be taken as a type of the cure He is anxious to bring to all who are deaf to His words and who do not confess His Divinity. But to some extent, all of us suffer from spiritual deafness and dumbness, and, unfortunately, too often we do not realize our infirmity. We hear, but we do not hear what we should hear; we speak, but we do not speak "right."

One way of testing our hearing and our ability to speak "right" is to seek the Divine Physician in a spiritual retreat. Following the earnest desire of Pius XI, houses of retreat have been opened all over the country, and are now accessible to most of us. In these quiet sanctuaries, we can kneel before Him, and if we pray with faith we shall feel the Divine hand of healing laid upon us, and hear His compelling words, "Be thou opened."



# CHRONICLE

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**THE CONGRESS.** President Roosevelt, July 15, in a letter to Senator Alben W. Barkley declared the Supreme Court fight must go on. Opposition to the measure mounted higher and higher until on July 19 a veritable bombshell burst in the faces of administration supporters. Governor Lehman of New York, close friend and ally of Mr. Roosevelt, in a letter to Senator Wagner urged the Senator to vote against the Roosevelt bill. Governor Lehman feared the measure might lead to "curtailment of the constitutional rights of our citizens." During the five months of controversy, Senator Wagner had failed to permit his constituents to know where he stood on the question. The return of Vice President Garner to Washington after long absence was regarded as significant. Rumors spread that the court-packing scheme might be abandoned, that a last-minute, desperate effort to heal the widening breach in the Democratic ranks was under way. Senator Barkley was elected leader of the Senate Democrats to succeed Mr. Robinson, receiving thirty-eight votes against thirty-seven for Senator Harrison. Mr. Garner on July 21 conferred with Senator Wheeler, generalissimo of the court-bill opponents, told him the administration was giving up its court-packing scheme, informed him he and his colleagues might write their own bill in salvaging the non-controversial portions of the judiciary reform proposal. . . . July 20, the administration Farm Bill, substitute for the AAA, was introduced into the House. . . . July 15, the Treasury Department announced signing an agreement with Brazil, making available \$60,000,000 of United States gold for protection of Brazilian currency.

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**THE HOME FRONT.** Representatives from citizens' groups and industries from twelve States met at Johnstown, Pa., July 15, organized to defend the "inalienable constitutional right to work." . . . A project for a naval reserve auxiliary, composed of yacht owners, was undertaken by the Navy Department. . . . The President's National Resources Committee on July 17 made public its report on "Technological Trends and National Policy, Including the Social Implications of New Inventions." The committee stated: "This document is the first major attempt to show the kinds of new inventions which may affect living and working conditions in America in the next ten to twenty-five years." . . . The United States Chamber of Commerce July 17, declared that the methods proposed for the administration's program in the creation of seven regional agencies for power and flood control were a departure from the method "expressly provided in the Constitution," for dealing with problems common to several States. . . . Department of Agriculture economists estimated the 1937 cash income of

farmers would be about \$9,500,000,000, nearly \$1,500,000,000 more than their income in 1936, more than twice their income in 1932. . . . In Rochester, Minn., on July 18, Dr. Jean Piccard rose into the air, lifted by ninety four-foot white rubber balloons. He sought to learn whether a multi-balloon craft could later carry him into the stratosphere. After six hours in the air, he came down in a tree top in Iowa, 110 miles away, rather satisfied with this first experiment of the kind ever made. . . . Ralph M. Easley, of the National Civic Federation, made public a letter to President Roosevelt, July 18, charging that Communists controlled the personnel and supervision of the Federal writers and theatre projects. . . . The Navy ended its search for Amelia Earhart at sunset, July 18. . . . The Social Security Board reported that total obligations for public relief in the United States were approximately \$12,000,000 less in March than in that month last year. . . . Two Negro youths were lynched in Tallahassee, Fla., July 20. The youths were charged with stabbing an officer. . . . In Detroit, a Common Pleas judge ruled that the Ford Motor Company and eight individuals must face trial for the beating of United Automobile Workers near the Rouge plant on May 26. . . . In Decatur, Ala., the State waived the death penalty, obtained a jury conviction of ninety-nine years against Andy Wright, a defendant in the Scottsboro cases.

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**SPAIN.** Nationalist headquarters reported July 15 that Leftist troops had been driven from their positions on the Aragon front. In the sector about twenty-five miles south of Madrid, General Franco's troops repulsed a Leftist attack, inflicted heavy damage on the attackers. . . . July 18, Nationalists celebrated the first anniversary of "the national uprising against the Communist tyranny." Reds celebrated the same occasion. . . . Nationalist troops attacked in the Villanueva del Pardillo sector, west-northwest of Madrid, July 18. . . . The Nationalists reiterated their assertion that the Leftist offensive on the Madrid front had collapsed, with a loss of seventy Red planes to five lost by the Franco forces. Nationalist headquarters admitted a dent in their line in the Brunete sector, claimed it was a desirable dent, since it held a large enemy force isolated in a perilous salient. . . . Over the air, General Franco outlined the state of anarchy which existed following the general election of February, 1936. General Franco said the monarchy might eventually be restored. . . . Trade agreements restoring normal commercial relations between Germany and Nationalist Spain were announced July 19. The new treaty replaces the old Hispano-German treaty of May 7, 1926. . . . July 20, Franco gained after forty-eight hours of ceaseless fighting in the sector fifteen

miles west of Madrid. . . . July 21, General Franco and José Maria Gil Robles, former War Minister, met in a conference described as "most important." A secret mission to the British Government for Señor Robles was hinted.

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GERMANY. Thirteen lay members and two employees of the Order of the Good Samaritan were sentenced July 16 on immorality charges in the Nazi campaign against religious organizations. . . . Three more Protestant pastors were arrested for taking up collections in their churches. . . . On July 20, the fourth anniversary of the signing of the concordat with the Vatican, the Nazi press burst into a hymn of hate. . . . July 18, Chancellor Hitler ordered suppression of all works of art that were not immediately comprehensible to the average German. "An exhibition of degenerate art" was opened in Munich, July 19. . . . Dr. Alfred Rosenberg, in a letter marked "strictly confidential" dropped the mask from the Nazi church policy. He declared Hitler sealed the fate of the Church by appointing him, "despiser of the Papacy," to the Cabinet with full control over the spiritual life of Germany. He said a slow and steady destruction of the Church was decided upon. "The Catholic church is already completely encircled," Rosenberg boasts. "There is no Catholic press to speak of. . . . The church fights with her back to the wall. . . . The skillful exploitation of a few smuggling cases and the masterful staging of the moral turpitude trials have had a most devastating effect on priestly authority."

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JAPAN-CHINA. What commenced on July 7 as a brush between a handful of men grew to a potential clash between two great armies. Nanking continued to send soldiers north of the Yellow River; Japan poured battalions from Manchuria, Korea and Japan. Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek informed the Chinese nation Japan was harboring designs on North China and used the Lukouchiao incident as an excuse to bring in her armies. Japan charged Chinese soldiers wantonly fired on Japs engaged in a manœuvre. China denied this; retorted the Japanese soldiers had no business being there anyway. Tokyo said the movement of Chinese troops into Hopei Province violated the two-year-old Ho-Umetzu agreement. This agreement was never made public, is not accepted as valid by Nanking. Japan asserts it contains a Chinese pledge not to send troops of the Nanking Government into North China. China appealed to the United States and thirteen other governments in the name of the Nine-Power treaty, the Kellogg pact and the covenant of the League of Nations. . . . July 21, hostilities were resumed between Chinese and Japanese forces west of Peiping. A long-range artillery duel lit up the night.

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ENGLAND. The Anglo-German and Anglo-Russian naval treaties were signed July 17. The treaties restrict the size and gun caliber of warships, provide

for exchange of building plans with the British Government. Russia's Far East navy is exempt from the provisions of the treaty. . . . July 19, in the House of Commons Foreign Secretary Eden warned Italy Britain would fight, if necessary, to protect her interests in the Mediterranean Sea and along the road to India. . . . July 22, the House of Commons declined to commit itself at this time on the Government plan to partition Palestine. The plan will be presented to the League of Nations for consideration, and later on will be considered by the London parliament.

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RUSSIA. The light industry and the food industry lagged on many essential goods. Even in Moscow stores, usually better supplied than most Soviet stores, many staple products were unobtainable. . . . Execution of twenty-four more alleged saboteurs was reported from the Soviet Far East, July 20. . . . Persecution of Lutheran clergy in Russian Ingria continued.

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MARCONI. Guglielmo Marconi, inventor of the wireless, died unexpectedly of a heart attack July 20 in Rome. Marconi was born in Bologna, Italy, April 25, 1874, of an Italian father, an Irish mother. At the age of twenty-one Marconi became convinced that invisible electric waves discovered by Heinrich Hertz seven years previously could be used to transmit messages through the air without wires. He established the first radio station in his father's home near Bologna, sent messages more than a mile. Supported by backers in London, he organized the Marconi Wireless Telegraph Company, Ltd., in 1897. In 1901 Marconi sent the first wireless (the simple letter "S" in the Morse code) across the Atlantic Ocean. In 1931, Marconi installed a radio station at the Vatican. Pope Pius XI became the first Pope to speak over the radio, the first one really to address *urbi et orbi*. . . . Marquis Marconi died fortified with the last Sacraments of the Church.

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FOOTNOTES. Serious rioting aimed to prevent the Yugoslavia-Vatican concordat broke out in Belgrade streets. Serbian women, members of the Orthodox church, were said to be the instigators of the rioting. Prince Paul, Regent, Premier Milan Stoyadinovitch and others were threatened with excommunication by Orthodox leaders, who say the concordat will mean the end of Orthodoxy in Yugoslavia. . . . Eamon de Valera was re-elected President of the Executive Council July 21, when the new Dail Eireann held its first meeting. This is the last Free State Dail. The next Dail will be part of the two-chamber Legislature under the new State of Ireland with a President of Ireland at its head. . . . July 17, Pope Pius speaking to pilgrims from the United States praised the "magnificent courage" of Cardinal Mundelein in defending the rights of the Church. . . . July 15, the League of Nations regime in Upper Silesia came to an end.



# CORRESPONDENCE

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## INVITATION TO BAPTISM

EDITOR: As AMERICA pointed out with singular grace a few weeks ago, a certain baby was born at Loyola Community Theatre in Chicago on June 15-16, and on August 7-8 this same baby will be baptized at the Blackfriar Institute of Dramatic Art, Catholic University, Washington.

So will the readers of AMERICA and Catholics everywhere please consider this their personal invitation to the baptism of the National Catholic Theatre Conference?

General sessions and committee conferences will be held at Catholic University throughout Saturday, August 8. Monsignor Corrigan will give the welcome and Monsignor Sheen will be the key-note. An informal banquet will be held Saturday evening at the University, and on Sunday morning there will be a special Mass at the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception, at which Monsignor Ready, Executive Secretary of the N. C. W. C., will preach. Committee and general conferences will be held Sunday afternoon, and in the evening the Blackfriars will present a program of entertainment.

And when we leave Washington we hope to have established a simple center through which to clear the best plays, the best ways of doing them and the best means of getting more people to do what we are proposing.

The Catholic theatre is no longer a dream. It never was. It lives in hundreds of parishes and colleges up and down the breadth of this country. All it needs is our collective will to give it recognition—collective will together with our Catholic collective action.

And don't let anyone say we haven't the plays. The Federal Theatre is overwhelmed now trying to index them!

Los Angeles, Calif.

EMMET LAVERY  
Acting Chairman

## BUT DO WE KNOW?

EDITOR: That well-known New England educator, W. T. Miller, is "disturbed by the pessimistic note" in my brief article on secondary education, published in AMERICA (July 3). While he admits that I am "justifiably worried," he adds, "but all of us know the problem."

But do we? If I may judge from the proceedings of our educational associations, the vast majority of those who direct secondary education are not in the least aware that there is any problem. Let me qualify that. While they are satisfied with the aims and methods of the secondary schools, they do admit one problem. It is how to wring more money

out of the pockets of the already overburdened taxpayers.

Mr. Miller knows the problem. So do many other able and conscientious teachers and administrators. But they are, I believe, an unconsidered minority. Were the case in the hands of Mr. Miller and of others like him, I should take heart. Since it is not, I shall continue to sit in a corner, and froth with rage as I think of that monstrosity which we style "secondary education." I still maintain what I wrote in my article: "I forbear to call this institution a school."

Finance is not secondary education's real problem. The real problem is how to make secondary education educate. I do not know the solution, yet surely it is proper to call attention to the fact that a solution is needed. But I do know that it will never be found until, as I wrote, educators recognize that "the whole country needs a reconsideration of this stage in education."

Address Withheld

JOHN WILTBYE

## REPORTED VICTORIES

EDITOR: The character of the alleged Loyalist advance in its series of reported victories for the past eight days and the conditions on the other hand in the territory still held by Franco (whose defeat is reported certain) can be seen by any person who will take the small trouble of comparing two dispatches published on the same page of the New York Times for July 15. The dispatches are forwarded from the Times' two principal correspondents:

1. From Salamanca, William Carney writes:

General Franco received the foreign press correspondents today. "All of you go to the front and verify personally. . . . I am glad to welcome you here. I wish to thank you for your work, particularly because we have no money for propaganda. You are free to go wherever you like. We only ask you to tell the truth. You will find order everywhere and life as normal as it can ever be in war times."

2. Herbert Matthews, reporting from Madrid:

The Loyalist advance in the Sierra sector continued today according to a communiqué to-night. Correspondents have not been allowed to go to the front [nor to leave Madrid] since the offensive began [eight days ago].

Enough said.

Elmira, N. Y.

OWEN B. MCGUIRE

## WE PROVIDE

EDITOR: Surely Miss Lincoln would not have us infer that AMERICA is guilty of neglecting the Poor Rich Man. Only two weeks back Father Feeney spent an entire article on him.

Baltimore, Md.

THOMAS J. LEARY

# LITERATURE AND ARTS

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## ENGLISH NOVELISTS WRITE ANEMIC BOOKS

FRANCIS X. CONNOLLY

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AT least once a week some reviewer of recent fiction twists the Lion's tail. It is a diffident little twist, hardly likely to disturb the lordly beast whose terminal appendage has been knotted by Irish nationalists, wagged by French statesmen and ingloriously snipped by Fascist dictators. It is quite definitely twisted, for many reviewers have been insisting that British fiction is deplorably sterile. The complaint appears to be an honest one, for despite the fact that American fiction has been more earthy than the earth and has made the work of our periphrastic British cousins appear refreshingly polite in comparison with our own downright medical frankness, it is true that British novels have of late been extraordinarily thin.

The reasons why American readers consider many of the new British books merely "interesting" are rather familiar. First of all the material of English fiction has on the whole been worn out. The novelists used up every available colonel in the India service, retold all the anecdotes about the headmaster's wife and the precocious Carswell, Lord Craigthorpe's third lad, and combed the counties through for inarticulate girls in tweeds who love to walk in the mist and press the soft wet violets against their faces.

Our familiarity with the types so frequently found in the British fiction springs not only from the fact that England itself is a settled, homogeneous country but also from the sameness of the authors' backgrounds. Most of the writers belong either to the middle or upper class, even though they write articles from the labor point of view. With notable exceptions like the late Arnold Bennett and H. G. Wells, who are distinctly lower middle class, they differ very little from each other either in manner or in knowledge of society. Their point of view, intellectual and social, always smacks of the public school, especially when they are taking pains to unveil the horrors of public-school life.

This however, does not explain why the English novel has become so competently dull. It is rather a symptom of the real cause which is this—the English writer has developed craftsmanship almost to the exclusion of all the other qualities of fiction. In

contrast to the American novelist, the Englishman writes very well, but he seems to be content merely to write well without expressing anything very significant or very new. Sinclair Lewis may show signs of hacking, may overemphasize the wrong points at times, but one could never accuse him of being content with a slick story. The Englishman on the other hand betrays an unwillingness to come to grips with his problems. When he does overcome his dislike of philosophy, more often than not he expresses a fantastic platonism like Charles Morgan's in *The Fountain* and *Sparkenbroke*.

Out of the welter of new books from England three of the most popular and the most successful must suffice for illustration. Most readers will agree that J. B. Priestley's *They Walk in the City*, Neil Bell's *Strange Melody* and Hugh Walpole's *A Prayer for My Son* represent the average production of the Englishman more accurately than do Aldous Huxley's *Eyeless in Gaza* or Siegfried Sassoon's memoir on the war. Priestley, Bell and Walpole are, we may assume, "normal" authors and one cannot be far wrong if one generalizes from their work. Oddly enough, considering how much they differ from one another superficially in temperament, in choice of theme and to a certain extent in audience, they are essentially similar in method and their faults may be traced to an exactly similar defect.

*They Walk in the City* is a rather harmless story concerning two young lovers, natives of the industrial West Riding in Yorkshire, who come together by chance, are separated, wander throughout London and after many adventures are reunited and presumably live happily ever after. It is slow paced and deliberate, its long even narration occasionally broken by rolling essays on the sordidness of modern urban life, the wickedness of business men, the ecstasy of young love and the indomitability of the human spirit.

We feel at the end that Mr. Priestley has not made a single mistake, but neither has he written a single tingling line. Without being in the slightest sense trivial, he has never been important, without sounding a single false note in his development of character and manipulation of incident (and there



are as many strange and thrilling incidents in this novel as there are in Agatha Christie's mysteries) he has never sounded a single note with universal overtones.

The reason why this excellent novel is not a great novel rests in the fact that it was written out, not thought out, planned, not meditated, charted, not discovered. One imagines the author saying to himself: "The first chapter shall recount the meeting, the second chapter the friendship, the third chapter the separation with an appropriate digression on the nature of first love." Analysis of the chapters confirms this impression. Each one ends with a twist that sends the reader spinning along with an unanswered question, much like the old film serials with their thrilling "Next Week—The Escape."

The result of this planning is an orderly story which rises and falls by design and which is startlingly predictable, not only in incident, but also in character. A pattern cannot vary; a character already destined to pursue a certain line of activity cannot perform his prearranged actions unless the author is sure that he will not change. Development, therefore, in its organic sense, cannot be expected in *They Walk in the City*, and it is precisely in this lack that one finds the reason for Priestley's failure to attain greatness.

Precisely the same flaws betray Neil Bell, whose *Strange Melody* is one of the best written books of the year, but one destined to be listed as "competent," "adequate," or "technically perfect" according to the preference of the historian. This novel is a fictitious biography of John MacDermott written in the first person by his daughter Gip. MacDermott enjoys a full and fascinating life. Intellectually brilliant if not profound, spontaneously gay and spendthrift, he sails through poverty, sadness, disappointment, slander and success without losing his original charm. The fact that he is so entirely human, although by profession he is an author, endears him to his readers before the first part of the book is finished. In MacDermott there appears to be real life, warmth, solidity. Through him we enjoy the seascape at Bredford, we survive the squalor of Gallacher's Rents in London, we taste the sumptuous plenty of country houses and yachts, and we sense the bitterness of death.

But we never truly get inside the character, because we are never permitted to forget that *Strange Melody* is a picture. The marks of the workman are strewn about. The ancient principles of clearness, coherence, climactic arrangement, illustration, are paraded in such regular order that one wonders whether or not *Strange Melody* were written to order. Mr. Bell wrote his book not from inner compulsion, but because he was able to write it. Indeed his fluency matches that of his own character who explained his incredible capacity for writing stories in this fashion.

It's all a matter of craftsmanship; the difference between the amateur and the professional. . . . I've served my apprenticeship and learned my job, and of course I can do it quickly and easily. . . . Searching for the right word! Pah! if you've got to do all that grubbing and delving you're a bungler.

*Strangely Melody* is also a matter of craftsman-

ship. Like MacDermott, Mr. Bell has also learned how to do his job and he does it amazingly well. It is not at all inconceivable that, given normally good health and freedom from worry, Mr. Bell could dictate three fine tales each year with less effort than a lawyer might employ in preparing three important briefs.

The case of *A Prayer for My Son*, Mr. Walpole's latest novel, presents several difficulties which are not found either in Priestley or Bell, but it is generically the same as the other two novels. Mr. Walpole has a theme, in this case the power complex, and he cuts his cloth accordingly. Like the lawyer, he is not interested in facts or persons for their own sake, but simply insofar as they are necessary for his brief, and being a craftsman he designs them to fit his purpose. When Rose Clennell, the unwed mother, visits her son at his grandfather's home and finds that her modern hardness was not proof against her natural maternal feelings, the reader is prepared for a study of her emotional reactions. This he receives in part, but the major section of the book is given over to the activities of old Colonel Fawcus. This psychopathic character dominates the book, even though he is presented only through the eyes of the other persons.

The natural story element, sensed instinctively in the first chapter, is abandoned for the melodramatic element of the Colonel's struggle for power because Mr. Walpole was not following the meanderings of the heart but the dictates of the head. He ended episodes where he intended to end them, not where they intended to be ended. He vigorously suppressed incidents that threatened to wander away with the story and judiciously refused to answer questions that howled to be answered because neither his time nor his inclination permitted. In other words Mr. Walpole willed a certain line of action and autocratically enforced that will, even when he was forced to cut a character in half or snip off the tail of an anecdote.

The skilled technique of the three writers discussed is beyond question. The question is whether their technique has not become so facile that truth of incident and truth of character have been forced to yield to the semblance of truth which almost any clever man can fashion out of his imagination. It is all stereotyped and ready-made. Neither life nor art is quite so simple.

What British fiction seems to lack is not artistry, which it has to excess, not skill in language, which most of their better writers possess, but a new standard of judgment for character. That standard should abandon all titles, trappings and official positions, all generalizations, however correct, on the genteel spinster, the confused parson, the avaricious city man, the lovesick bank clerk dreaming of Hollywood, the factory girl and her hope of release; it must get closer somehow to the spirit of man as a sovereign person, the spirit which cannot be explained away by a reference to a public school or to the army or to the late war. With a new knowledge of man the English novel may be less pat and less polite, but it will also become infinitely more important.

# BOOKS

## TRADITION OF CECIL CARRIES ON

ARTHUR JAMES BALFOUR. 2 Vol. By *Blanche E. C. Dugdale*. G. P. Putnam's Sons. \$10

STATESMAN, politician, philosopher, nephew of a Prime Minister, successively Secretary for Scotland and Ireland, Leader of the House of Commons, Deputy Foreign Minister, Prime Minister, First Lord of the Admiralty, Foreign Minister, Lord President of the Council; leader of the Tory opposition for twenty years, a public life extending through three reigns, covering over fifty years; such was the broad inspiring canvas that awaited the privileged biographer. As one reads the record now one is made sensible how fate, fortune and a goodly admixture of human cooperation broke the rough stones, paving a road, if not of ease, at least of comforting opportunity for this favored scion of the Cecils. "Uncle Robert" and "Dear Arthur" stood for more than influential patron and admiring nephew in the last quarter of the nineteenth century.

A like nurturing care followed the Great Man beyond the earthly portals of the scene in which he played so prominent a part. Pick your biographer is as important advice as to pick the funeral orator. Few will deny that Lord Balfour has been justified in his selection. It was important that no political enemy should anticipate or that a bungling friend's hand should mar that attractive canvas, even by those nuances and delicate shadings that mean so much for the completed picture. The biographer was handpicked, a member of the "Hotel Cecil," the favorite niece of A. J. B. The writer was not only picked but coached, in fact, a Boswellian touch is given on some of the more momentous thorny subjects in the second volume.

It can be said that Mrs. Dugdale has produced a fascinating story for all interested in the period of English history it covers. The biography as a whole betrays the skilled hand, devoid of those artifices and crudities that in a long and otherwise interesting story often cloy the spirit of the reader. That it is always the unadulterated *ne plus ultra* of historical fact is too much to expect or claim. The facts are in the main presented and while the reader's conclusion might on many issues diverge from the biography even substantially, this will be due to difference of judgment.

Arthur James Balfour after Eton and Cambridge entered Parliament in 1874. He was thereafter in the House of Commons until 1922, when created Earl, he passed on to the Lords, which he attended almost to his death. The only break was in the rout of the Unionists in 1906 when he was without a seat in the Commons for a few months. The first volume brings the story to the latter date. It includes his Irish Secretaryship, leadership of the House and the four last years as Prime Minister. Outside the 1902 Education Act, reckoned very important by A. J. B., importance in this volume is centered on the years when the languorous, seemingly indolent and dilettante statesmen ruled the strong-armed policy of Dublin Castle, drawing ever more within its iron grip the wild, turbulent tenantry of Kerry and Clare.

These were the days of the Plan of Campaign, of the Land League, of Captains Boycott and Moonlight, when Balfour's chief opponent was an Anglo-American, who with a temperament not too dissimilar to A. J. B., gave new hope, courage and, what was more needed, organization to national Irish aspirations. With all due respect to the biographer we think the case of her hero suffers if the Crimes Act and coercion policy of these days are considered an achievement. "He had been, as Chief Sec-

retary and afterwards as Prime Minister, more responsible than any other single man for the policy which had removed from Ireland all her removable grievances against English rule." If we except the Wyndham Act which today looks trivial enough, there is no record except the Crimes Act to confirm the above statement. Yet when the Free State had been established, A. J. B. thought his Irish policy was the beneficent precursor of the better days.

There is a sense in which Easter Week and the aftermath derives from the draconian 80's. Pearse, Plunkett, McDonough, Clarke and Collins were the products of those years of British thralldom. It is one of our human foibles that the scholars bear grudgingly the stern discipline of the school and are not always properly grateful to their masters. The deeper instincts of a people are often imprisoned in epithets; in the long story of the tragic misrule of Dublin Castle there are no more detested names than "Buckshot Forster" and "Bloody Balfour." Contemplating his goodwill visit to the United States, A. J. B. mused, as he loved to, on the reasons that kept the two great English-speaking countries cold to one another.

As to the Plan of Campaign and the Vatican condemnation, the unenthusiastic response of the Irish hierarchy is intelligible to one acquainted with the situation. When the entire story of the rack-renting Clanricardes and O'Callaghans is studied, with the forceful evictions and battering ram, despite the tenant's willingness to pay what he absolutely could, the morality of the Plan is not so summarily dispatched as is usually assumed. Aside from the morality it was surely an anomaly that the only go-between the Vatican and Ireland was the Erringtons and English Catholics, who unfortunately have often left a painful record of muddled politics in their own affairs.

The second volume, though dealing with the years when the Conservatives were out of power, except for the period of the Coalition, nevertheless deals with the more eventful and fruitful years for A. J. B.; with the exciting days when the Parliament Act and the contest of the Liberals with the Lords held the stage center as well as the still more hectic ones when Asquith was eased out of office to make way for the coming hustling little Welsh lawyer, an event which Balfour strangely enough countenanced. Curzon's disappointment when Stanley Baldwin succeeded is retold as well as Balfour's own rejection by his party in 1911. Though outdistancing all his contemporaries in the length of service and in the influence he commanded and the honors he achieved, the impression is left on the reader that he will not find a place among the great English Premiers. His charm and power of team work made him a successful party leader, a good conciliator and goodwill getter. He shone in producing general memoranda on grand schemes such as Palestine.

The other appendix treats of Balfour's philosophy and is from the pen of his friend, Pringle-Pattison. The repeated assertion of his belief in a personal God must supply for the lack of such confirmation from his published works. These are entirely innocent of *convincing* proof. His non-rational philosophy erects a wobbly bridge between science and belief; a belief that in practice found him equally at home with the Covenanters and the Anglicans on Sunday.

This biography is not perhaps the leading one of the year; it is one of the most important. Written in admirable temper and a good sense of proportion it surpasses most in interest and attractiveness. Book craft here reaches high perfection in producing two volumes that are a delight to the eye and the aesthetic sense as well as a credit to Putnam's.

WILLIAM J. BENN



## PREFERS TYRRELL TO THE HOLY FATHER

MY WAY OF FAITH. M. D. Petre. E. P. Dutton and Co. \$3

THE AUTHOR of this book is announced in the publisher's blurb as "a survivor of a great religious crisis, which is still active in its results." The great religious crisis is the rise and development of "Modernism"; the active results are exemplified all too unhappily in Miss Petre's story of her religious career. There is a Modernistic flavor to every chapter, however wholesome her protestations of Catholicism may be.

The pride of intellect that launched the movement is operative in all her judgments, appraisals and condemnations. It colors her own subjective states; her self-satisfying analysis of mysticism; her definite condemnation of the eremitical life and her veiled sneers at contemplatives; her arrogance in assuming that her own high-sounding doubts are superior to simple faith; her disdain for the Scholastics and her serene smugness as she pities the guiding intelligences in the Catholic Church for their labored efforts to catch up with the times.

I shall not attempt to catalogue the explicit errors in dogmatic teaching. There is no need. The very atmosphere of the narrative is diseased. The authorities quoted with approval are almost always the wrong authorities. Plotinus and not Augustine; Milton, not Dante; Pater, not Newman; Tyrrell, not the Holy Father; Pascal, Bergson, Haeckel, etc.

Called to the bar of her personal criticism, the poor old Church hears a condemnation of its futility, or receives the condescending approval of having "made a good try." The downright disobedience of Modernist leaders is colored with the crimson of martyrdom. Their destructive agency is glorified into "a flinging of self on the bayonets," a knightly sacrifice to open some breach in the Church's "fanatical" defense of its deposit of Faith. Miss Petre coddles complacently the Pope's damnation wherein Modernism is called a "congeries of all heresies," and is apparently proud of her share in an opposition that rose to such noble proportions.

It is a very sad book—and a very mean book. The everlasting pride must escape the author's examinations of conscience. It may be that as she holds strongly for humility without humiliations, she believes also that it is a charity in her to shock our faith by her superior doubts and disloyalties. But in this volume she has given us nothing. She has aired a few sorry religious prejudices. She has put in writing her loyalty to her martyred Modernistic friends, and "modernistically" she has entitled her attitude of defiance and disobedience, her "way of faith."

R. J. McINNIS

## GOOD ADVICE TO THE UNINFORMED

FALSE SECURITY. By Bernard J. Reis. Equinox Cooperative Press. \$2.75

INVESTORS, who in their hapless plight seek the security of a steady income from investments, are portrayed in *False Security*. The author qualifies for the task because he is a lawyer, an accountant, an experienced investigator and a director of Consumers' Union. Mr. Reis makes no effort to catalogue all the betrayals of investment trust. Rather he selects instances which reveal the unprotected position of the unwary.

Since 1917 the number of investors has vastly increased, without any semblance of organization. This factor has not only encouraged untruthful advertising and competition among investment bankers, but also has made possible the divorce between ownership and control of corporations. The irresponsibility of directorates

has grown apace and reports on corporate practices remain shrouded in the mystery of falsified or unintelligible reports. Investment bankers and promoters have allowed their interests to merge, in spite of the diverse functions assigned them theoretically. Certified public accountants and trustees have become formalities merely and reorganization committees reshear the shorn lambs. Courts, in view of the complexities of modern corporation law and the expenses of trials, afford questionable refuge. The Government, even with its Securities and Exchange Commission, affords the individual investor slight protection. In short, Mr. Reis' analysis portrays a set-up in which the investor's savings are regularly taken in a perfectly legal manner.

The author makes constant and effective use of Senate investigations and court records, as well as financial reports and accounts. Although the instances adduced to substantiate his case are familiar to members of the financial community, they may prove shocking to the uninformed. In dealing with institutions no wholesale condemnations occur and adverse comment is settled upon known and demonstrated abuses. The same care does not always extend to characterizations of men, who occasionally suffer loss of caste on meagre evidence.

The remedy proposed calls for organization, representation, investigation, legislation and vigilance by and for consumers. The student of social science will find this work a truthful indictment against *laissez-faire* economy. Catholic students will concur heartily with the analysis and rejoice that the author's proposed solution approximates the occupational group system of the Encyclicals, that it takes a step towards reconstructing organic forms in society.

RAYMOND F. X. CAHILL

## GODLESS WAIFS ON TROPICAL ISLAND

PROBLEM ISLAND. By Francis C. Kelley. St. Anthony Guild Press. \$2

WOULD children, free from prejudice and ignorant of ecclesiastical history, discover God on an island all their own? Old McLean, who had found his fortune in the gold-hills of California and retired to his yacht instead of Park Avenue, is handed his opportunity to pose the problem when an earthquake occurs near his boat off shore and rescue work supplies him with a group of homeless children. After legally adopting the orphaned waifs, Old McLean buys them a tropic island and hires competent pedagogues to give them a purgated education. The missing link in their training is to be religion: no instruction on, no reference to, no mention of God, Revelation, the Church, theism is to be allowed. The problem is twi-plex. What will these untaught children learn of God by unaided reason? What will educators learn from schooled but unbiased children?

Twenty years later Larry, son and heir of the old prospector, returns to Problem Island seeking the answers. In keeping with his father's will, he has brought a group of commissioners and their secretaries to ascertain and publish the results of the McLean experiment. Among these commissioners are a scientist, an agnostic journalist, a creedless Protestant, a Catholic priest, an educationist. Before this disparate company the guinea-pig children, now grown to man's estate, display their self-cultivated ideas on the existence of a Supreme Being, describe the mental roads along which they found Him, ventilate their views on the possibility of a Divine Revelation, and appropriate means for perpetuating the heaven-sent message. This is the skeleton of Bishop Kelley's *Problem Island*, but it is a skeleton having plenty of meat on it, the strong meat of ripe philosophy.

Since the children in the experiment are, after all, brain children, their creator can and does endow them with a wealth of brains. In fact several of them are as deep as Aristotle and as shrewd as Ulysses. Trained meta-

physicians could pride themselves on the deductions made by these Problem children. It is a case of putting the fruit of Scholastic Philosophy in the mouths of bright youngsters. Their keenness of intellect is partially attributed to the fact that the headmaster has thoroughly educated his wards, partially to the absence of collegiate distractions on Problem Island. Thus by inference and implied comparison does the author censure the depth of contemporary education and the width of extra-academic interests. Moreover, he indicts our rugged uncivilization by having these Islanders prefer their peaceful isle to our hectic world. One of their number had fared forth, lived in American cities and had returned to tell his tale of sorrow abroad, whereupon the others decided to remain innocents at home.

In graceful diction and with pointed apologetic His Excellency has used the novel, not merely to entertain, but as a vehicle to convey basic ideas about God and the naturalness of religion. This book, then, is propaganda, wholesome propaganda, the action being quite subordinate to the unfolding of lessons in theodicy. Hence those who sail into Problem Island seeking high adventure and royal romance may be disappointed; those questing sound proofs for the existence of God will not be left stranded.

ARTHUR E. GLEASON

## BOOKS IN BRIEFER REVIEW

**I REMEMBER MAYNOOTH.** By Don Boyne. Longmans, Green and Co. \$2

THERE are two ways of writing about an institution: one, the conventional, statistical, historical, factual; the other the psychological and introspective where an attempt is made to capture the spirit of the place in a series of events and impressions, reenacted and relived. This delightful little book of essays—only five chapters and the foreword—follows the second method with notable success and compelling interest.

It is a series of sketches which at once recalls the past for all former Maynoothians in a more telling way than any objective presentation and at the same time focuses the attention of the outsider on what is best in the Maynooth life and tradition. It is written with the light hand yet covers much wisdom and understanding, as witness the discerning criticism of Canon Sheehan's Luke Delmege. It will prove a delight to all former students of Ireland's great national seminary and is worth its rather expensive price to all intellectually inclined.

**LIFE AND LETTERS OF JANET ERSKINE STUART.** By Maud Monahan. Longmans, Green and Co. \$3.50

PERHAPS it is because we are all so deeply interested in ourselves that, paradoxically, any "Life and Letters," any news of our fellows' inner life, attracts irresistibly. And when the news in question concerns a holy person, there is yet another reason for interest—and the most important of all: we hope for hints on our own journey heavenward. This book will not disappoint on any count. It has everything requisite for a beautiful volume, inspiration, matter, style and format.

As an educator Reverend Mother Stuart won well-deserved fame; her work on *The Education of Catholic Girls* passed her thoughts and ideals on to a vast audience. But as a moulder of character, and, above all, of souls, her influence was most felt and appreciated. She had herself so mastered the principles of the spiritual life that it seemed to become an almost natural process, making her advice natural too, and timeless, miraculously not once flattening into the preachy or pedantic.

Possessed of, in a generous degree, what Newman beautifully called "solicitude of heart," her personality radiates through these letters. And a very English personality it was just as, say, Father Gerard Hopkin's personality was English—striking instances, both, of

how Grace acts upon human nature without destroying it.

It is a joy to welcome this reprint of Reverend Mother Stuart's *Life and Letters*, and at a more popular price, to the Second Spring Series of Modern English Classics.

**THE HEART HAS WINGS.** By Faith Baldwin. Farrar and Rinehart. \$2

BUILT on the familiar "triangle plan" this interesting novel tells the story of a married man who, possessing everything which this world ambitions, meets at his daughter's wedding the bridegroom's cousin, a young girl, and at first sight he forgets his age and his wife. Among decent people outside of stories, the girl would take herself out of the dangerous environment, especially since her own father has nearly broken her heart by marrying her own school chum. But of course, being a story, the girl does not do the obvious thing, and the justification seems to be that she and he are both much interested in flying. To complicate matters, the man's chief friend and assistant in his work, has long been suffering from unrequited and unsuspected affection for the man's wife. His tragedy consists in being obliged to stand by and watch the situation develop, without being able to do anything to frustrate it.

The entire theme is handled as if one's feelings were the chief consideration in the marriage bond, and the obligation of justice were quite secondary and comparatively unimportant. When the wife is on her way to Reno, the girl realizes suddenly that the man is really too old for her and calmly gives him up. Hovering in the background all the while is the noble hero, who has put up with treatment no man would stand, and whose devotion nothing could quench, and so when she finally gives the signal, he falls at her feet. The style in which the story is written is quaint and unmistakably feminine.

**NORTHWEST PASSAGE.** By Kenneth Roberts. Doubleday, Doran and Co. \$2.75

HAVING treated the American Revolution in his previous novels *Arundel* and *Rabble in Arms*, Mr. Roberts here takes up the preceding decade. Langdon Towne, a young New Englander who aspires to fame as a painter of scenes of Indian life, is accidentally thrown in with the Rangers of Major Rogers and joins them in a thrilling expedition against the French and Indians. He learns to admire the Major as the greatest of Indian fighters and by a chance remark stirs him to the ambition of finding the passage across America to India and Japan for which men had been searching since the days of Columbus. Opposition from Johnson and Gage, the chief colonial officials, proves the Major's undoing, and the dream of finding the Northwest Passage vanishes.

An outline gives little idea of the wealth of material stored in this story. Historical records have been carefully woven into its sketches of the men and events of that early period, and most of the notables of the day appear directly or indirectly with telling hints of their character and aims as seen through the eyes of an American colonist. The low state of English political life and the frightful poverty that existed in London alongside lavish displays of wealth are drawn with keen insight.

**THE LIFE OF CHRIST.** By Isidore O'Brien, O.F.M. St. Anthony Guild Press. \$1.00, \$2.50

THE purpose of this *Life* is well expressed by the author (p. xii): "It is therefore an attempt to combine the narrative style for the casual reader with a simple textbook form for study clubs." Father Isidore accomplishes his task well, and the book makes for pleasant and spiritually profitable reading. With his definite audience always clearly in mind, he avoids technical problems and moot points of exegesis. Where these cannot be shelved completely, they are handled briefly, clearly and then dismissed. The knowledge of the scholar is in evidence but is not allowed to obtrude itself on a less educated reader. References and questions for study-club use are so appended to each chapter that they do not bother the "casual reader" at all. Father Isidore's book should become very popular.



# THEATRE

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STILL looking back over this theatrical season, and learning our lessons from it—or trying to—we make some interesting discoveries.

For example, though producers seemed to be hurling new plays at us in greater numbers than in any other recent year, we were given only eighty-three new offerings as against eighty-nine last year and 113 two years ago. Of musical shows we had only eight this year, and only two revues—also a definite falling off in production.

Of the eighty-three new productions only nine passed the success standard of 100 performances; and the average length of "runs" this year was shorter than that of '34-'35. This is not so surprising. We were all struck by the rapidity with which still-born offerings were interred.

The record-breakers in the matter of runs are *Tobacco Road*, which opened in 1933, *Dead End*, which started early in the autumn of '35, and *Boy Meets Girl*, which made its debut a week or so after *Dead End*.

An able statistician estimates that by counting all the theatrical offerings of 1936-'37 we have a total of 6,337 performances, as against 7,515 the previous year. That, if accurate, is one of the most surprising findings of the season. Almost any one would have guessed the total of this year to be ahead of that of last year by at least 100 performances.

Among the dramatic productions *Tovarich*, *You Can't Take It With You* and *Brother Rat* had the best attendance records, with *The Women* and *High Tor* close seconds. Noel Coward's offerings might have broken some records if Mr. Coward had not grown so weary of well-doing that he closed his show at the height of its run and went back to England to rest. *Having Wonderful Time* and *Yes, My Darling Daughter* also passed the one hundredth performance mark, and *The Amazing Doctor Clitterhouse* approached it very closely with eighty-odd performances.

A surprising number of plays that had good reviews from the critics folded up after a month or two to the amazement of the enthusiasts. Of these the most conspicuous were *Night Must Fall*, which closed after sixty-four performances and *Love From a Stranger*, which lingered only half as long. Season runs had been freely predicted for both these plays, and both were sold to moving picture producers for big prices.

When we come to other plays that should have stayed more than a couple of months, but did not, we have *St. Helena*, departing after sixty-three performances, *Johnny Johnson* after sixty-eight, *Promise*, leaving after only twenty-nine, *Young Madame Conti*, after twenty-two, and *Plumes In the Dust* after eleven.

It is when we look over the list of swift extinctions that we find indications of new records. *Cross-town* and *Stark Mad* gave us five performances. So did *Green Waters*, *A Point of Honor* and *Sweet River*. *Curtain Call* and *In The Bag* favored us with four performances. *Call Me Ziggy* had three, and *Timber House* and *Money Mad* died even as they were born, after one hectic presentation.

All this might seem fuel to the fancy of those who are convinced that the American theatre as an institution is in its death throes. But no intelligent commentator will be so misled. The optimists, however, must be reminded that as feeders to the New York stage the summer try-out play-houses scattered through the countryside are not proving as effective as had been hoped. Only one such offering reached a mark anywhere near the hundredth performance. That was *The Country Wife*, tried out at Westport, Connecticut in '35, and achieving eighty-eight performances in New York City in '36-'37. *Matrimony Preferred*, also put through its first paces at Westport, got through sixty-one New York perform-

ances, but with audible gasps of exhaustion toward the end of its run; and *Seen But Not Heard*, originally given before the citizens of Locust Valley, Long Island, closed after its sixtieth performance. *Penny Wise*, another foster child of Locust Valley, lived through forty-nine New York representations; while *Two Hundred Were Chosen*, produced in the august atmosphere of the University of Iowa, ended its career after its thirty-fifth performance.

The novelists did not have as much of a look-in at the theatrical box-offices as usual. Only three New York plays this season were made from books, as against fourteen in '35-'36. The three were *And Now Goodbye*, *Behind Red Lights*, and *It Can't Happen Here*.

England sent us fourteen of our eighty-three productions. *Dr. Clitterhouse*, *Night Must Fall*, *Love From a Stranger*, *St. Helena*, *The Laughing Woman*, *Tonight at Eight-thirty*, *Green Waters*, *The Holmeses of Baker Street*, *Tovarich*, *Promise*, *White Horse Inn*, *Young Madame Conti*, *Frederika*, and *Storm Over Patsy*. Of these, six had also been played in Paris and other European cities; and only two of the fourteen, *Tonight at Eight-thirty* and *Tovarich* were unqualified popular successes, though several of the others had remarkably good runs and fine notices.

An interesting feature of the season's end was a determined effort to revive some old-time successes. Anne Nichols, whose loyalty and devotion to her ewe lamb, *Abie's Irish Rose*, is equally admirable and understandable, gave that erst-while success a really good revival, with a cast including several members of the original company. Personally I found the revived play interesting and, on the whole, well-acted. I have never been able to understand the harsh feeling so many reviewers cherish against this little comedy. It is highly sentimental and perhaps improbable, but it is well written and well constructed and it has amused and pleased countless thousands of human beings. I was not surprised to see it given another production and I think it rather a pity the revival did not continue through the entire summer.

Another interesting experiment was made by Ben Lundy in his revival of two famous melodramas which found great favor a couple of decades ago—first *The Bat* and then *The Cat and The Canary*. Both these plays had record runs when they were first offered, and Mr. Lundy was justified in making his experiment, though probably he lost money by it. Certainly he soon dropped the enterprise and also dropped his original plan of producing half a dozen more old favorites. Most of the reviewers were rather hard on the two revivals he showed us. I myself found *The Bat* well worth while in its new setting, especially after the first few nights when the players had mastered their lines and the action was quickened. May Vokes was exactly as funny as she was in her original interpretation of Lizzie, and, as then, she carried off the acting honors. If I criticized the acting as a whole, I should say that the actress who did the cool-headed spinster over-played her role. She made the lady too gay and wise-cracking for the part. That spinster was no fool. She would have kept her head, but she would have shown that she had enough brains to realize the horror around her. She would not have ignored a dead man lying on the floor, or cheerily wise-cracked while she stepped around his body. In other words she would have shown some evidence of nervous tension, even though she was gallantly conquering it. That is quite a subtle part and should be played with some imagination. If I were writing today on the worst acting of the season, as I hinted that I might do, I should be tempted to include her impersonation.

ELIZABETH JORDAN

## FILMS

**TOPPER.** There is a mixture of realism and fantasy in this brittle comedy which gives it an interest beyond the ordinary. Sportive ghosts share the action with mere mortals as the artifices of the movie camera are put to amusing use, and the film is geared to the proper swiftness of farce. The Kirbys are empty-headed socialites who decide that something should be done to awaken the staid Toppers from middle-aged dullness but are killed in an automobile accident before they can carry out their high resolve. Nothing daunted, however, they gather their airy semblances together and lie in wait for Mr. Topper, who soon comes riding along in their refurbished car, bound for a late divorce from his disinterested wife. The ghosts descend upon him and together they embark on a series of escapades which makes Mr. Topper a headline eccentric. When he, too, has an accident, he prefers the company of his disembodied playmates to life with Mrs. Topper but they insist on the more substantial plan of a happy reunion. The bright dialogue is splendidly handled by such expert players as Roland Young, Billie Burke, Cary Grant and Constance Bennett and it is literate enough to satisfy the demands of sophisticated adults. (MGM)

**THE TOAST OF NEW YORK.** This film is chiefly noteworthy for the rounded characterization of an early American individualist which Edward Arnold adds to his fine gallery of screen portraits, and, more than the careful and authentic reconstruction of old New York, his performance conveys the spirit of the time in which this historical drama is laid. It is the story of Jim Fisk who drops his medicine-show business at the opening of the Civil War to prosper at cotton smuggling and go on to the higher gamble of the stock market. Attacked by the press as an ogre feeding on small investors, he conceives the gigantic scheme of cornering the nation's gold and enters upon a financial struggle with Cornelius Vanderbilt. Bailed in this dream and disappointed in love, his strange career is abruptly closed by mob violence. The direction of Rowland V. Lee is turned toward a large scale portrait which will serve for all the robber barons of our checkered post-Civil War industrialism. Frances Farmer, Cary Grant and Donald Meek lend support and Jack Oakie provides more than one man's share of comedy. The production is faultless and the morality of great wealth is a timely subject of discussion, so adults will undoubtedly find this production much to their liking. (RKO)

**THE CALIFORNIAN.** The story of the romantic bandit who plies his trade in the interests of the oppressed wears well after all these years, mainly, perhaps, because of our thorough grounding in the noble exploits of one Robin Hood. It is linked, in this instance, with the American invasion of Spanish California, another dependable item of historical melodrama and the two elements mix well enough to produce a moderately appealing bit of sentiment. The son of a Spanish landowner turns bandit in order to protect the possessions of his father and their neighbors from the depredations of easterly immigrants until the coming of a just governor restores law and order. Ricardo Cortez, Marjorie Weaver and Katherine de Mille are featured in this family-sized film. (*Twentieth Century-Fox*)

**SUPER-SLEUTH.** This is strictly Jack Oakie's party, and a comedy drama tailored to his expansive measure. As an amateur criminologist, he becomes hilariously involved with a letter-writing fiend who spends his unliterary hours in a wax-works museum. It is very funny family entertainment, with Eduardo Ciannelli and Edgar Kennedy. (RKO)

THOMAS J. FITZMORRIS

## EVENTS

**FORTHCOMING** cultural changes in American social life were indicated. . . . The constantly increasing acreage being given to the growing of garlic along the country's length would soon affect its breath, experts disclosed. . . . The tendency of modern American boys to depart from the traditions of their forefathers was sharply outlined. A survey revealed that the carving of initials on school desks was falling into desuetude; would soon be a lost art like constitutional government. . . . Thumb-sucking, long a favorite method employed to express juvenile personality, was decreasing, three years of research showed. Specialists in the thumb-sucking field said abandonment of the practice would transform the whole tenor of infantile social behavior. . . . The old belief that human conduct is unpredictable received fresh confirmation during the week. A New Yorker named Murphy had his name changed to Levy; a mid-Westerner named Cohen had his changed to Sweeney. Whether a Mon-signor Levy and a Rabbi Sweeney may come out of all this later on was said to be something only the future can reveal. . . . The power of ideas was exemplified in Chicago. Stung by an idea which had slipped into her head, an elderly lady traded a valuable painting for a cheap pup. . . . The profound depths sometimes plumbed by family affection was illustrated in Iowa. Two brothers, parted for fifteen years, met, embraced one another so ardently they broke each other's ribs. . . . A new use for eggs was discovered in Massachusetts. Held up by a gunman, a farmer pelted him with fowl eggs, drove him to cover. . . . An improved technique developed by Western robbers was tried out in Venice, California. Successful on its first test, it will soon be an integral part of American social life, prominent robbers believed. The method involves use of the victim's nickname to give a friendly tone to the transaction. "Hello Dutch," cried out two men from a parked car in broad daylight. "Dutch," expecting to meet friends, walked over to the car, was relieved of a thousand dollars by two strangers. No one knows where the next test will occur.

Foreign offices have been puzzled why Japan should seek war at this time. Last week the probable reason came to light. News leaked out of Tokyo that there is a grave shortage of corpses in Japan's medical laboratories. . . . A hitherto unsuspected cure for indigestion was stumbled upon. A sufferer walking in the woods stepped on a rattlesnake. The rattler rattled; the sufferer ran. The ex-sufferer can now eat anything without subsequent distress. . . . The importance of not being forgetful was brought out. A friend told a New Yorker that a mixture of alcohol and camphor would relieve pain in the leg but forgot to mention that the mixture was for external application. The New Yorker drank several alcohol-camphor cocktails. Hospital authorities said he might recover. . . . Grotesqueries flashed forth. . . . A North Carolina man cut open a cantaloupe; a butterfly flew out. . . . An Illinois farmer sought refuge from a storm under a tractor. A full-grown skunk kept him company, banished loneliness. . . . A Pennsylvania high-school boy was hit by a speeding truck. Upon coming to, he found he had a strange new accent. Experts tested it, discovered it was a genuine Harvard accent. . . .

A board of psychologists, after a survey, issued a list of things that diminish married harmony, lead to divorce. Wives were advised not to correct their husband's English in public. The practice irritates husbands, the survey showed. Husbands were cautioned not to employ sarcasm when referring to the cooking. The survey omitted mentioning one important fact—that no judge can grant a divorce. There will be no divorces when people realize there is no divorce.

THE PARADER